CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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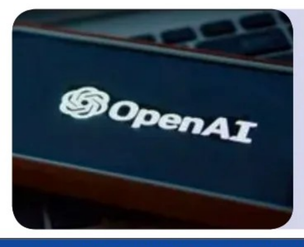

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'Lethal actions not justified'

Jaishankar flags sailor killings in a call with US Secretary of State, says India won't tolerate blockade violation; Rubio reacts 'blockade violation won't be tolerated'

NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar reiterated India's strong protest with the US Secretary of State Marco Rubio oveer the killing of three Indian mariners in a US military strike on a merchant vessel in the Gulf of Oman.

Jaishankar, who is currently visiting Europe, spoke to Rubio on the phone. Taking to X, Jaishankar wrote, "Spoke to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio this evening. I reiterated India's strong protest at the attacks by the US Navy in the Gulf that killed three Indian mariners. "Such lethal actions against commercial shipping are not justified," he said.

Rubio released an official statement that any violation of American blockade and illicit transport of Iranian oil through the Hormuz will not be tolerated.

He conveyed the same to Jaishankar. "The Secretary stressed that all commercial vessels should immediately comply with orders from US forces as they seek to uphold peace and security in the Strait," State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott said.

On Friday, India summoned US Charge d'Affaires Jason Meeks and told him that the American military's lethal strikes on commercial vessels with Indian crew members off the coast of Oman are unacceptable. The senior diplomat was summoned on Wednesday night as well.

TANKER ATTACKS

- A Palau-flagged oil tanker, Marivex, carrying 24 Indian seafarers, was disabled by US forces on June 8. All crew members were safely rescued.
- On June 10, the US struck another Palau-flagged tanker, Settebello, killing three out of the 24 Indian sailors on board.
- Another vessel, Jalveer, a Guinea-Bissau-flagged tanker with 20 Indians, was attacked on Thursday.

Attack on 4th vessel "fake": MEA

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Saturday dismissed reports of a fresh attack on an Indian-crewed vessel near the coast of Oman, saying the information was false. The clarification came amid reports of a fresh attack and concern over the safety of Indian sailors in the Gulf region following a series of recent attacks on commercial vessels near the Strait of Hormuz. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told reporters that the government had directly contacted the master of the vessel Liaki Freedom to verify the situation. "We have spoken with the Master of the vessel Liaki Freedom, who has confirmed that all crew members are safe and that the reported information is false," Jaiswal said.

5 killed in IAF AN-32 plane crash in Assam, probe on

JORHAT

Five Indian Air Force personnel lost their lives after an AN-32 transport aircraft crashed during landing at the Jorhat airbase in Assam on Saturday, IAF officials said.

The co-pilot survived the accident and is receiving medical treatment.

The aircraft met with the accident while landing at the airbase in Jorhat, triggering an emergency response and fire-fighting operations within the military facility. Senior IAF officials rushed to the site following the crash.

In a statement posted on X, the Indian Air Force said: "An IAF An-32 aircraft met with an accident during a routine sortie today at approximately 1000h at Jorhat, Assam. Crash site management and initial enquiries are on at this time. IAF requests everyone to refrain from speculation till preliminary results are not in."

The force added, "IAF deeply regrets the loss of lives and stands firmly with the bereaved families in this time of grief. IAF will share more details as they are in." The crash is the latest in a series of accidents involving IAF aircraft in recent years. In 2019, an AN-32 crashed in Arunachal Pradesh near the India-China border, killing all 13 personnel on board after the aircraft went missing during a transport mission.

Earlier this year, in March, an IAF Sukhoi Su-30MKI fighter aircraft crashed during a training mission in Assam's Karbi Anglong district, around 60 km from Jorhat. The crash claimed the lives of Squadron Leader Anuj and Flight Lieutenant Purvesh Duragkar, following which the Air Force launched an investigation.

AN-32's role in IAF operations

The AN-32 is a twin-engine turboprop military transport aircraft designed to operate in high-altitude regions and extreme weather conditions. The Indian Air Force operates around 100 aircraft of the type, which are widely used for logistics missions, troop movement, humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief operations, particularly in remote and mountainous areas.

Battle for Bengaluru: KBG seeks clarity on ministerial role

BENGALURU

Amid the ongoing standoff over the Greater Bengaluru Development portfolio in the Karnataka government, senior minister Krishna Byre Gowda has deferred taking charge, saying there is a lack of clarity over the departments that fall under his jurisdiction.

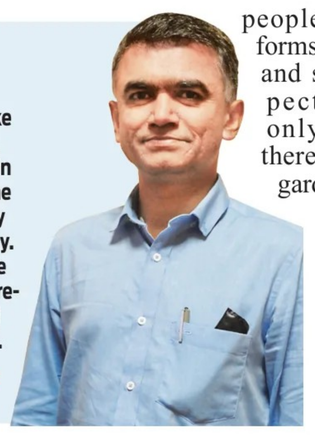
Speaking to reporters on Saturday, Gowda said he has sought clarification from Chief Minister D K Shivakumar regarding his responsibilities and is awaiting a decision before formally assuming charge.

The minister stressed that a clear definition of responsibilities was necessary to ensure accountability and deliver on public expectations.

Gowda, who was inducted into the Cabinet on June 3 and assigned the Greater Bengaluru Development portfolio, is understood to be unhappy that the Chief Minister has retained control of two key urban planning agencies, the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) and the Bengaluru Metropolitan Region Development Authority (BMRDA).

While Gowda has been given charge of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), the five city corporations under it, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), and Bengaluru Metro, the exclusion of BDA and BMRDA has reportedly led to the present impasse.

> Because whenever I take up any responsibility, there is accountability in delivering results for the expectations placed by the people and the party. To deliver results, there should be clarity on the responsibility given and what has been shared.
> -Krishna Byre Gowda, minister



When asked whether he would refrain from taking charge until the issue was resolved, the minister declined to answer directly and merely smiled before walking away.

"I would like to state clearly that I don't have any disgruntlement. The Chief Minister and the party have given me the difficult responsibility of looking after Bengaluru development. This is a difficult challenge. I don't see it as a power, because this is a big responsibility amid huge expectations from the people of Bengaluru, as well as from the CM and the party," Gowda said.

He noted that citizens and the party expect meaningful, people-centric reforms in Bengaluru and said such expectations can only be met if there is clarity regarding the scope of responsibility.

"Because whenever I take up any responsibility, there is accountability in delivering results for the expectations placed by the people and the party. To deliver results, there should be clarity on the responsibility given and what has been shared," he said.

Gowda said he had brought the matter to the Chief Minister's attention and was assured that a decision would be taken soon."The CM will decide and resolve the issue, after that whatever work needs to be done will be done," he added.

"If there is clarity regarding the responsibility given, it will be helpful to perform the duty, if not I will not be able to work as per expectations and will not be able to deliver results as expected." He said he was waiting for the Chief Minister's decision before proceeding further.

Assam tightens Aadhaar rules

GUWAHATI

Assam Cabinet has decided to tighten Aadhaar enrolment rules for adults above 18 years to prevent illegal immigrants from getting identity cards. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the routine Aadhaar enrolment process for adults will no longer be open and will follow stricter checks.

Applications will be verified in detail and sent to the Deputy Commissioner, who will recommend approval to the state government for final decision.

The Chief Minister clarified that children below 18 will continue Aadhaar enrolment under the existing system without any change in procedure.

He said the move is meant to stop misuse of documents and improve national security while protecting genuine citizens rights. Spe-cial relaxation has been given to Scheduled Castes Scheduled Tribes and Tea Garden communities until March 2027 for enrolment.

Officials said Aadhaar enrolment is not suspended but every adult application will now go through strict case by case scrutiny. Authorities believe the new system will reduce misuse and ensure only eligible residents receive Aadhaar cards after proper verification.

No fertilizer crunch in K'taka, Cong panic-mongering: Joshi

NEW DELHI

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi has strongly rejected the Congress allegations, asserting that Karnataka has more than adequate fertilizer stocks for the Kharif 2026 season.

He stated that available supplies exceed requirements and urged the state government to efficiently manage inter-district distribution.

In a strongly-worded statement, the Union Minister stated that the Congress government's claims were misleading and contrary to official data, adding that the Centre has gone out of its way to ensure uninterrupted fertilizer supplies to Karnataka despite global supply disruptions caused by geopolitical tensions and export restrictions by major producing countries.

"The facts clearly show that there is no shortage of fertilizers in Karnataka. The Centre has ensured supplies far in excess of requirements and continues to closely monitor the situation," he stated.

Joshi noted that Karnataka witnessed unusually high fertilizer sales during recent months. Sales of DAP and NPK fertilizers increased substantially compared to the previous year, while fertilizer consumption during the Rabi season exceeded projected requirements. This, he said, had impacted available inventories within the State.

To prepare for Kharif-2026, the Centre had proactively supplied additional fertilizer stocks between January and March this year. Karnataka received 33,000 metric tonnes more Urea than required, along with an additional 1.29 LMT of DAP and 1.58 LMT of NPK fertilizers to ensure advance stocking.

He maintained that the responsibility of smooth distribution now rests with the state government.

Fertilizer availability & stock breakdown

The Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution reported the following stock availability for Karnataka:

- **UREA:** Against a pro-rata requirement of 3.13 lakh metric tonnes (LMT), an availability of 5.59 LMT was ensured, leaving a closing stock of 3.12 LMT (with more in transit).
- **DAP:** Against a requirement of 1.89 LMT, 2.57 LMT was made available, leaving a current stock, including transit quantities remain at 1.16 LMT.
- **NPKS:** Against a requirement of 4.36 LMT, availability stands at 9.28 LMT, with current stocks touching 5.61 LMT.

SPEEDING MERCEDES CRASH KILLS 2 IN HOSKOTE

Bengaluru: A late-night drive turned into a tragedy when a speeding Mercedes-Benz crashed into a bridge wall on the Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway near Hoskote early Saturday morning. A 25-year-old woman died on the spot, while the driver fell off the bridge into a river and died instantly.

The Hoskote traffic police have identified the woman as Sajia, a private company employee from Bengaluru. The driver was identified as Rizwan, a city-based car dealer. died on the spot.

IMA PASSING OUT PARADE 2026

Watershed moment in IMA history: Prez Murmu

... as first batch of women officers pass out from IMA after 93 years of its establishment.

DEHRADUN

After 93 years of its establishment, the Indian Military Academy (IMA), Dehradun, witnessed a historic moment when the first batch of women cadets for permanent commission took the 'Antim Pag' (final step) from the academy's hallowed parade ground on culmination of the passing out parade of the Spring Term – 2026 on Saturday.

Nine women cadets of the pioneering batch was pipped as Lieutenants alongside their male counterpartsat the Indian Military Academy (IMA) in Dehradun after having completed a four-year grueling training regimen, including the first three years at the National Defence Academy (NDA), Kharakvasla, while five were commissioned as Flying Officers at the Air Force Academy (AFA) in Dundigal.

Their commissioning marks the culmination of a journey that began after the Supreme Court opened the NDA to women in 2021.

Until now, women officers in the Army and Air Force have entered through the Short Service Commission (SSC), becoming eligible for permanent commission only after years of service. Officers commissioned through the NDA-IMA and NDA-AFA pipelines receive it from day one.

The first batch of 17 women cadets, including 10 for the Army, six for the Air Force and three for the Navy had passed out from the NDA in June 2025 and proceeded to their respective service academies for pre-commission training.

NDA alumni have a one-year training programme at the IMA, whereas the training period for direct entry cadets after graduation is 18 months.

While permanent commission has been extended to women officers across all arms they are a part of following directives of the Supreme Court, they are still not eligible to join the IMA directly and have to become officers either through the NDA or the Officers Training Academy (OTA) in Chennai.

'HOPE MORE WOMEN TO FOLLOW SUIT'

Terming the induction of the first batch of women officers for permanent commission as a watershed moment in the history of the Indian Military Academy (IMA), President Droupadi Murmu said she hopes that many more women would follow suit.

"I am especially delighted to see the nine women cadets. This is a watershed moment in the history of IMA. It is not only a milestone in the history of India's defence forces, but also an inspiring example of India's march towards women-led development. I am sure that many more women cadets will join the Academy," she said, while reviewing the passing out parade of IMA's Spring Term-2026 in Dehradun on June 13.

Modi kicks off France-Slovakia tour

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday departed for a six-day official visit to France and Slovakia, emphasising that Paris holds a vital position in New Delhi's overarching strategic vision.

Alongside high-level bilateral talks with French President Emmanuel Macron and Slovakian leaders, the PM's itinerary includes attending the G7 Summit in Evian and launching major tech-innovation initiatives designed to link Indian startups with European investors.

In a departure statement, Modi noted that his agenda will centre tightly on expanding trade, investment, and cultural ties between the two nations. The French leg of the tour focuses heavily on technological convergence and linking India's booming startup ecosystem with European capital. In Nice, Modi and Macron will jointly inaugurate "Bharat Innovates".

Following his engagements in Nice, Modi will travel to the Slovak Republic from June 14 to 15, marking the first-ever state visit by an Indian PM since Slovakia's independence in 1993. The historic stopover aims to capitalise on strong bilateral momentum. Modi is scheduled to hold high-level talks with President Peter Pellegrini and PM Robert Fico in Bratislava.

Historical importance

Modi's visit to the Slovak Republic from June 14 to 15 will mark the first-ever state visit by an Indian premier since Slovakia's independence in 1993.

Kumaraswamy accuses Congress of farmer land grabbing

Terming the final notification a betrayal of farmers, Kumaraswamy said the government had chosen to ride roughshod over local residents despite nearly 470 days of protests against the township project.

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

A day after the state government issued the final notification to acquire around 500 acres of land in and around Bidadi for the proposed Greater Bengaluru Integrated Township (GBIT) project, Union Minister and JD(S) state President HD Kumaraswamy launched a blistering attack on the Congress government, accusing it of waging a war on farmers, grabbing fertile agricultural land and ignoring more than a year of sustained protests by affected villagers.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the foundation day celebrations of the Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI), Kumaraswamy alleged that the state government had overridden farmers' objections and transformed what was projected as a development initiative into a bitter battle over land and livelihoods. This is not a township project but a land-grab project disguised as development. The project is less about urban planning and more about facilitating a lucrative real-estate exercise, Kumaraswamy charged. In a direct challenge to Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, who had reportedly questioned whether many of the affected landowners were genuine farmers, Kumaraswamy dared him to visit the villages around Bidadi and interact with those facing acquisition. Come with me to the villages. Let us stand before the people and ask them whether they are farmers or not, he said, describing the chief minister's remarks as an insult to the farming community and a reflection of the government's growing arrogance.

The land they want is not barren land. It is fertile, productive farmland that sustains thousands of families. Yet the government is determined to grab it in the name of development, he alleged.

The JD(S) leader further claimed that while farmers were fighting to protect their livelihoods, the government had responded with police cases, intimidation and coercion. Referring to FIRs registered against protesting farmers by Bidadi police, he accused the administration of using state machinery to suppress dissent even as Home Minister Priyank Kharge denied any crackdown. Kumaraswamy also took exception to Kharge's reported remark that the government was committed to implementing the project and that opponents were free to seek legal remedies. That statement alone exposes the government's mindset. It shows how little regard it has for farmers and their concerns, he said.

QUICK READ

Demand for minimum wage revision from the Centre

CH NEWS, Bengaluru
The state government has revised the minimum wage for workers. However, the central government has not revised the wages for 9 years. The wages of workers should be increased immediately, the Joint Forum of Non-permanent Workers of government and government-owned enterprises has demanded. Given the rising prices, increasing economic inequality, and the daily struggles of working class families, the revision should be done urgently. According to the rules, it should be revised once every five years. The central government had revised it in 2017. After that, the revision should have been done on January 20, 2022, said Forum convener Vijay Kumar.
The labour unions have demanded a revision and have approached the court, but to no avail. The central government has ignored the court's direction.

RTI can't be used for obtaining personal info: High Court

CH NEWS, Bengaluru
The Right to Information (RTI) Act cannot be employed as a mechanism for obtaining personal information merely for advancing a private claim, the High Court has ruled. Justice Suraj Govindaraj made the observation in a recent judgment while dismissing a petition filed by S Savithramma. She moved the Karnataka Information Commission for details of the assets and liabilities of SP Jayapal, who worked as Deputy Controller at Central KSRTC office during 1990-2002, saying he fraudulently obtained a sale deed from her, and she required the documents for pending civil suits. On May 6, 2025, KIC rejected her application, citing that the information sought by her fell under personal information and could not be disclosed as it was exempted under the RTI Act. Challenging the order, Savithramma approached the high court, arguing that Jayapal is a public servant and, therefore, any immovable property acquired by him, together with the corresponding disclosure of assets and liabilities, should be revealed. Justice Govindaraj, however, rejected the argument.

Leaders exchange views on bioenergy implementation

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

State Bioenergy Development Board Chairman SE Sudheendra received Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on his return to Bengaluru airport after adverse weather conditions at Hyderabad airport on Friday night while traveling from Delhi to Hyderabad. SE Sudheendra had a long discussion with the Telangana Chief Minister regarding the implementation of bioenergy projects and the establishment of production units and exchanged views on the actual situation in Telangana State. The implementation of bioenergy projects, which are clean and green fuels, in Telangana State is being carried out by Telangana Renewable Energy Development Corporation Limited. Revanth Reddy suggested to met the Finance, Planning and Energy Minister of Telangana regarding the implementation process of the bioenergy policy in the State to take necessary steps and agreements to achieve development in the bioenergy sector in the coming days through mutual cooperation. The Chairman SE Sudheendra said that he would immediately meet the Deputy Chief Ministers and Finance, Planning and Energy Minister Mallu Bhati Vikramarka along with the State government delegation and discuss the future frameworks for the development of Bioenergy sector.

Wider footpaths, better drains, Magrath Road unveils its new look

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

The 350-metre stretch between Brigade Road and Commissariat Road has been transformed into a redesigned urban street with wider accessible footpaths, aesthetic streetlights and upgraded drainage infrastructure. The project was carried out under the supervision of Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) Chairman and Shantinagar MLA NA Haris, who resides off Magrath Road. Haris, who inspected the roadwork, told, he has been personally monitoring the project and providing inputs, including on the choice of materials, streetlight design and other features. According to Bengaluru Central City Corporation Executive Engineer Atif Mohammed, one of the key interventions was raising the road level by more than a foot to address waterlogging. The stretch was earlier very low-lying and prone to flooding during heavy rain. The road level has been increased and access to adjoining properties and intersecting roads improved, he explained.

The project, which cost around Rs 3 crore, took nearly a year to complete. The road carries a major underground KPTCL power line connected to Museum Road substation, adding to complexity of the work. Mod Foundation assisted in coordinating the project among multiple government agencies and utility providers.

Senior Urban Designer Amritha Ganapathy said the road has been built with durability and long-term maintenance in mind. We have used stone matrix asphalt, which offers a longer service life than conventional surfacing. Additional underground stormwater drain pipes have been laid on both sides of the road, along with extra gratings to ensure quicker drainage during heavy rain, she said, adding, we coordinated with every property along the stretch to ensure utility connections are in place and functioning before the chambers closed." Residents hope the redevelopment will permanently address flooding issues on the stretch.

R Avinash, who lives nearby, said waterlogging had long been a concern. With this redevelopment and similar improvements on nearby roads.

The transformation is visible to anyone who visits the stretch. We paid attention to every detail, including design of streetlights and pedestrian spaces. Once a few issues at Brigade Road-end are sorted out, the road will be ready for use, Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) Chairman and Shantinagar MLA NA Haris said.

Delay in compensation justifies 9 percent interest: HC

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

An interest rate of 9 percent is more appropriate in cases involving death and serious injury, especially where there is a long delay in the claimant's receiving the compensation, the High Court ruled. Justice Tara Vitasta Ganju, upholding the decision of the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, in a 10-year-old accident case, noted in her recent order that there cannot be any 'straitjacket formula' in determining the rate of interest and that the same must depend on the facts and circumstances of each case. In November 2016, one Ravanamma, on a bicycle, was hit by a speeding van when was crossing the Outer Ring Road at Kasturinagar, east Bengaluru. An injured Ravanamma was taken to KR Pura Government Hospital, wherein the doctors declared her 'brought dead'. Her husband and two children moved the tribunal seeking compensation, claiming that the deceased was working as a mason and supporting the family with monthly earnings of Rs 9,000. In February 2018, the tribunal awarded Rs 16.5 lakh compensation along with 9 percent interest. United India Insurance Company, the insurer of the van, challenged the same.

BMRCL DROPS VETERINARY COLLEGE METRO STATION PLAN

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

The Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has dropped the plan to construct Veterinary College Metro station, which was initially conceived as part of Sarjapur–Hebbal Namma Metro corridor under Phase III-A. Officials said the decision was taken following suggestion of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), which reviewed the 37.8km project. Sarjapur–Hebbal Metro line, pending approval from central government for a long time, has undergone modifications. Earlier, BMRCL revised the design of underground stations to bring down expenses, and it has now decided to remove the proposed Veterinary College station from the project. A senior MoHUA official said, officials had earlier inspected the alignment of the proposed Metro corridor and project area. They observed that the distance between Veterinary College and Ganganagar stations was less than one kilometre and that ridership at the station could be low. Based on this assessment, a recommendation was made to drop the station. Following the revisions, the project cost is expected to come down to around Rs 25,999 crore.The original Detailed Project Report estimated that the 37.8km corridor, comprising 14.28km of underground and 23.524km of elevated sections, would cost Rs 28,405 crore. The state cabinet approved the project in January 10, 2025, and correspondence with the Centre seeking approval began in January 15, 2025. Meanwhile, BMRCL has engaged IIT Roorkee to study the feasibility of providing for a double-decker flyover along the elevated sections of Sarjapur–Hebbal corridor.

Siddaramaiah denies favouritism charge over Rs 72 cr grants for OBC organisations

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

Former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has rejected accusations of discrimination and bias over his govt's preliminary approval of Rs 71.8 crore to 155 organisations of various backward communities to construct community halls and student hostels. A row erupted over the order which was issued on June 3, the day Siddaramaiah stepped down as Chief Minister and DK Shivakumar assumed office. After copies of the order circulated on social media, critics alleged favouritism, claiming that organisations of the Kuruba community, to which Siddaramaiah belongs, received over Rs 41 crore of the total allocation. Allegations also surfaced that a trust named after Siddaramaiah's late son, Rakesh Siddaramaiah, in Gadag was sanctioned Rs 50 lakh. Siddaramaiah clarified that the department's order is only a preliminary sanction, not a direct release of funds. He explained that the Kuruba community received a larger share simply because a higher number of organisations from the community submitted applications. He highlighted that preliminary approvals were also granted to numerous other communities, including Madivala, Lingayat, Vokkaliga, Besta, Balija, Golla, Jetti, Kumbara, Arasu, Helava, Savita Samaja, Uppara, Ganiga, Kuruhina Shetty, Halakki, and Reddy. Pointing out that the list is not final, Siddaramaiah said applications from other OBC organisations are being examined, and funds will be released to them as well. He said the government strictly follows a continuous reservation formula, 70 percent of funds are earmarked for Categories I and II-A, while 30 percent is reserved for Categories III-A and III-B. The higher allocation to certain groups reflects the larger number of castes and organisations covered under Categories I and II-A. To secure final funding under govt guidelines, organisations must submit proof of land ownership, local body building licences, and three years of audited financial statements through their district commissioners.

High court quashes claim on land granted to Siddaganga mutt

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

In a relief for state government and Siddaganga mutt of Tumakuru, the High Court has set aside an order of a single bench on over 14 acres of land in Bengaluru north taluk. A division bench, comprising Justices DK Singh and TM Nadaf, noted that the batch of petitioners who succeeded before the single bench had in fact engineered documents to show that the land had been granted by the govt on Oct 11, 1982, thereby playing a fraud on the court. The mutt claimed that the govt granted 14 acres 25 guntas at Kadaranahalli, Dasanapura hobli, in August 2010 for setting up a Dasoha Prasada Centre and added that the grant certificate produced by the petitioners was fake. On the other hand, petitioners Manjesh and others argued that in 1982, the land had been granted to them by the Special Deputy Commissioner. They also argued that the Karnataka Appellate Tribunal (KAT) could not have dismissed their claim. The single bench not only set aside the order passed by KAT but also opined that the mutt had failed to show that the grant certificate produced by Manjesh was fake. The decision in 2018 forced the mutt and the government to file separate writ appeals.

The High Court division bench pointed out that even before KAT, the claim of the petitioners considered their request for grant certificate, and the report of the revenue authorities indicated that the subject land was vacant.

ADVERSE EFFECT OF AI

AI boom pushes Cognizant out of Nasdaq-100 after two-decade run

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

Despite posting a strong first quarter and raising its full-year outlook, Cognizant is set to be dropped from the Nasdaq-100 Index after more than two decades, making way for a new crop of companies benefiting from the artificial intelligence boom. The IT services company's exclusion reflects its relative market capitalisation rather than its recent operating performance. With an intraday market capitalisation of about $24.5 billion on Friday, Cognizant's valuation has lagged many peers even as investor enthusiasm for AI-native firms has surged over the past two years. The Nasdaq-100, which tracks the 100 largest non-financial companies listed on the Nasdaq exchange, is among the world's most closely watched equity benchmarks. More than 200 investment products track the index, with over $800 billion in assets under management globally. Inclusion in the index often boosts visibility and attracts passive investment flows, while exclusion can trigger selling by index-tracking funds. Analysts said the risk of Cognizant losing its place in the benchmark had been apparent for several months as its market value failed to keep pace with newer technology companies tied to AI infrastructure, cloud computing and semiconductor ecosystems.

Some analysts also viewed Cognizant's accelerated share repurchase programme over the past year as an effort to support shareholder returns and bolster market capitalisation amid concerns that it could be pushed out of the index. As part of Nasdaq's annual reconstitution, Astera Labs, CoreWeave, Nebius Group, Rocket Lab and Teradyne will join the Nasdaq-100. They will replace Charter Communications, Cognizant, Insmed, Verisk Analytics and Zscaler. The reshuffle highlights how rapidly the AI boom is redrawing the technology landscape. Investors have rewarded companies seen as direct beneficiaries of the AI buildout, while more traditional technology and IT services firms have struggled to match their valuation gains. For Cognizant, the move comes despite improving business performance under CEO Ravi Kumar. The company has positioned itself as an AI services provider, highlighted a growing AI-led sales pipeline, and reported improving demand across key verticals. However, those gains have not translated into the kind of market-value expansion seen among companies at the centre of the AI ecosystem.

In May, Cognizant's board approved a $2 billion increase to its share repurchase programme and doubled its 2026 buyback target to $2 billion from $1 billion previously.

QUICK READ

Five arrested within day after rowdy sheeter murder

Shivamogga

Shivamogga police have solved the brutal murder of rowdy-sheeter Narasimha and arrested five accused within 24 hours of the crime. The incident occurred on Friday evening at the first turn of Karidevara Keri in Gandhi Bazaar. Considering the seriousness of the case, a special investigation team was formed under the leadership of the Additional Superintendent of Police. Acting swiftly, officers tracked down and detained the suspects during a special operation. According to police, a group of assailants attacked Narasimha with deadly weapons at an alleged gambling spot around 4:45 p.m., causing his death. The arrested accused are Ambu Anil, Madhu, Ravi, Katte Karthik, and Shabarish. Further legal proceedings and investigation are continuing.

Jokatte murder accused arrested in Goa

Mangaluru

Police have arrested a man accused of murdering an unidentified person near MSEZ at Arikere, Jokatte, under Panambur police limits. The accused, Prashant Kumar (36) of Bihar, was traced and arrested in Goa by Konkan Railway police. The victim's body, with a slit throat, was found on June 10. Blood stains near a rented house led investigators to suspect a tenant who had disappeared after switching off his mobile phone. Based on intelligence that he was travelling on the Nizamuddin Express, police launched a special operation and arrested him using CCTV footage and technical evidence. He has been handed over to Panambur police for further legal action.

KSRTC launched bus services from Mangaluru junction

Mangaluru

In a major relief for railway passengers and daily commuters, KSRTC's Mangaluru Division has launched city bus services from Mangaluru Junction Railway Station (Padil), fulfilling a long-pending public demand. The initiative aims to improve connectivity between the railway station and various parts of Mangaluru and nearby towns. The new services connect Padil with Kateel, Bokkapatna, State Bank and Kodikal through key city routes, offering multiple daily trips. Operated by the Mangaluru-3 Depot, the buses are expected to make travel more convenient for rail users arriving at or departing from the station. KSRTC officials have urged the public to make use of the newly introduced service, which is expected to enhance last-mile connectivity and reduce commuting difficulties for passengers.

Strong growth despite global economic challenges

Senior BJP leader Radha Mohan Das Agrawal said government policies helped lift 25 crore people above poverty.

MANGALURU

Senior BJP leader Dr. Radha Mohan Das Agrawal on Saturday asserted that the Narendra Modi-led government's policies had helped lift nearly 25 crore people out of poverty over the past decade, while steering India toward becoming the world's third-largest economy.

Addressing a press conference in Mangaluru, Agrawal said India had maintained a strong economic growth trajectory despite global challenges, including geopolitical tensions and market volatility. He noted that the country achieved a growth rate of 7.7 per cent and recorded significant progress in social and economic development.

According to Agrawal, India's economy expanded from about USD 1.9 trillion in 2013-14 to over USD 4 trillion, reflecting sustained growth and resilience. He added that the nation's economic performance compared favourably with other major economies across the world.

The Rajya Sabha member stated that unemployment remained around 5.1 per cent and inflation near 4.5 per cent, while per capita income increased from approximately Rs 49,000 to Rs 2.35 lakh during the period.

Highlighting welfare initiatives, Agrawal said the government had sanctioned nearly four crore houses, constructed around 12 crore toilets and provided free food grains to about 80 crore beneficiaries. He also cited the Ayushman Bharat healthcare scheme and the PM-Kisan programme, under which eligible farmers receive annual financial assistance of Rs 6,000.

Agrawal further said that educational and healthcare infrastructure had expanded significantly, with an increase in the number of AIIMS institutions, medical colleges and medical education seats across the country.

Referring to Karnataka, he claimed that central allocations and investments had increased substantially since 2014, boosting road, railway and urban infrastructure projects. He also highlighted the implementation of Jan Dhan, Mudra, Ujjwala, Jal Jeevan Mission and Ayushman Bharat schemes in the state.

He said welfare programmes, infrastructure development and economic reforms together had strengthened India's global economic standing and laid a foundation for sustained growth.

Pramod Madhwaraj denies Congress move, backs BJP

UDUPI

Former minister and BJP leader Pramod Madhwaraj on Saturday dismissed rumours about his alleged move to the Congress, reaffirming his commitment to the Bharatiya Janata Party and stating that public service remains the primary goal of his political career.

In an official clarification, Madhwaraj said reports and speculation regarding his possible entry into the Congress were completely baseless and had no truth in them. He reiterated that he joined the BJP not for power or positions, but with the intention of serving the people.

Madhwaraj said authority and positions only bring additional responsibility and should be viewed as opportunities to serve society more effectively. He maintained that he was neither seeking any post nor aspiring for power.

According to him, a leader's real strength comes from the trust and support of the people rather than from official designations. If entrusted with any responsibility, he would use it solely to address public issues and work for the welfare of citizens, he said.

Pramod Madhwaraj denies Congress rumours, says he remains committed to BJP, rejects claims of political shift and reaffirms public service as his main objective.

The BJP leader further stated that he would sincerely discharge any responsibility assigned to him by the party leadership. Even if no position was offered, he would continue working among the people as an ordinary party worker and remain committed to strengthening the organisation.

Expressing confidence in the BJP leadership, Madhwaraj said party leaders would recognise his work, loyalty and dedication to public service and take appropriate decisions at the right time.

He also thanked party workers, supporters and the public for their continued trust and encouragement throughout his political journey.

Appealing to the public, Madhwaraj urged people not to believe false reports and rumours circulating on social media and to rely only on official information.

"Power is not my goal; public service is my mission. Whether I receive power or not, I will continue serving the people," he said, reiterating his commitment to the BJP and dismissing speculation about any political shift.

FMCI hosts yoga seminar series on 'Healthy Aging'

MANGALURU

Father Muller Charitable Institutions (FMCI), in association with Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Bengaluru, and Delampady Yoga Prathistana, Konchady, has launched a week-long series of yoga seminars in observance of International Yoga Day 2026.

The programme began on June 12 at the Father Muller Indoor Stadium, Mangaluru, and will continue until June 20 under the theme "Yoga for Healthy Aging." The initiative aims to promote awareness about the role of yoga in improving physical fitness, mental well-being and overall lifestyle balance, particularly among young students and healthcare trainees.

The inaugural session featured Yogaratna Sri Gopalakrishna Delampady, a District Rajyotsava Awardee and veteran yoga instructor, as the chief guest. With over four decades of experience in promoting yoga, he has trained thousands of individuals and continues to advocate yoga as a holistic way of life for physical, mental and emotional health.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Michael L. Santhumayor, administrator of FMCI institutions, highlighted the importance of integrating yoga into daily routines. He noted that yoga plays a vital role in fostering comprehensive health and wellness, especially in today's fast-paced and stressful environment.

Several academic leaders attended the programme, including Dr. Antony Sylvan D'Souza, Dean of Father Muller Medical College; Dr. Shivashankara A. R., Principal of the College of Allied Health Sciences; Sr. Dr. Dhanya Devasia, Principal of the College and School of Nursing; Prof. Cherishma D'Silva, Principal of the College of Physiotherapy; and Prof. Cynthia Santhumayor, Principal of the College of Speech and Hearing.

Students from various constituent institutions participated in the inaugural session. The chief guest was introduced by Dr. Shailaja Katti, NSS Programme Officer, while the event was compered by Valerie Ann Lobo of the Allied Health Sciences college.

Following the inauguration, yoga sessions were conducted by Sri Gopalakrishna Delampady and his team, introducing participants to various yogic practices aimed at improving flexibility, concentration and mental clarity.

The seminar series will continue through the week and conclude on June 20 with a grand International Yoga Day celebration, offering students practical training and insights into adopting yoga as a lifelong wellness practice.

MLA Yashpal Suvarna visits family of accident victim

UDUPI

Udupi MLA Yashpal Suvarna on Saturday visited the residence of 1.5-year-old Daksh, who died after a coconut fell on him in Heranje village of Brahmavar taluk. Accompanied by Revenue Department officials and local leaders, the MLA met the grieving family and expressed his condolences.

During the visit, Suvarna directed revenue officials to submit a detailed report to the state government and assured the family that efforts would be made to secure maximum possible compensation through official channels. Residents also highlighted the lack of proper road connectivity in the area. Responding to their concerns, the MLA promised to prioritize the issue and explore funding options for road development.

Daksh's father, Prashant Poojary, and other family members were consoled by officials and community members. Authorities said the incident would be reviewed for eligibility under government relief provisions.

Bishop Leslie Clifford D'Souza emphasized selfless divine love and inaugurated destitute home during Kerekatte shrine annual feast celebrations.

Selfless service to poor brings blessings, says Bishop

KUNDAPURA

God's love is selfless, unconditional and ever-lasting, said Most Rev. Dr. Leslie Clifford D'Souza while delivering the homily during the annual feast of St. Anthony's Shrine at Kerekatte, Siddapur, on Saturday. He also inaugurated a newly constructed home for the destitute on the occasion.

The Bishop said that divine love does not depend on achievements or status and can be experienced through sincere devotion and a pure heart. He added that God's love offers strength in suffering and comfort in times of pain, guiding believers through life's challenges.

Speaking during the Holy Mass, he said human love may sometimes fade, but divine love remains constant. He emphasized that even those who make mistakes are forgiven by God and guided back to the right path. Selfless service, he noted, brings blessings and protection, especially when extended to the poor and needy without expectations.

The newly constructed home for the destitute was inaugurated by chief patron Philip D'Costa of Basrur, who formally cut the ribbon. Donors and supporters of the construction and feast celebrations were felicitated during the programme.

The Bishop, visiting the shrine for the first time, was honoured along with church leaders and members involved in managing the facility, including representatives of the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate.

More than 6,000 devotees attended the event. Clergy from the Diocese of Udupi and neighbouring regions, including Monsignor Francis Xavier Lewis, Vicar General; Fr. Steven D'Souza, Chancellor; and other priests and religious leaders, participated in the ceremony.

The programme was coordinated by church officials and concluded with expressions of gratitude to donors and volunteers who contributed to the successful organisation of the feast.

In a related message, the Bishop said the Diocese is prioritising spiritual growth, along with improvements in education and healthcare. He added that plans are being considered for a well-equipped hospital in the region, which could become a reality with the support of benefactors.

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED OPPOSING SPECIAL INTENSIVE REVISION DRIVE

SHIVAMOGGA

A public awareness campaign opposing the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was launched in Shivamogga on Saturday under the banner of SIR Virodhi Karnataka, with organisers alleging that the exercise could adversely affect the voting rights of vulnerable communities.

The awareness march forms part of the third route of a statewide campaign covering Uttara Kannada, Chikkamagaluru, Hassan, Shivamogga, Davanagere and Chitradurga districts. The yatra was flagged off in Shivamogga in the presence of activists, farmers' representatives and members of various social organisations.

Speaking on the occasion, advocate K.P. Sripal alleged that the SIR exercise could weaken democratic principles by excluding genuine voters from electoral rolls. He said the Constitution guarantees voting rights to eligible citizens and claimed that the revision process might disproportionately affect minorities, tribal communities and nomadic groups.

Sripal further alleged that authorities had identified a large number of voters for deletion and expressed concern that documentation issues could result in genuine voters losing their electoral rights. He pointed out that many citizens face discrepancies in personal records, including birth dates and identity documents, making them vulnerable during verification exercises.

He said the awareness campaign aimed to educate people about their voting rights and encourage them to remain vigilant during the revision process.

State Farmers' Association president H.R. Basavarajappa also addressed the gathering and said no authority should arbitrarily remove voters from electoral rolls. Describing voting as a fundamental democratic right, he urged the government to ensure that genuine voters are not excluded under any revision exercise.

Cong rumours baseless, says Pramod Madhwaraj

UDUPI

Former minister and BJP leader Pramod Madhwaraj on Saturday strongly dismissed reports suggesting that he is planning to rejoin the Congress, terming the speculation completely baseless and without any factual foundation.

In an official clarification, Madhwaraj said that he had already made his position clear earlier and reiterated that the rumours circulating in sections of the media and on social platforms had no truth. He emphasized that he did not join the Bharatiya Janata Party for personal benefit or political power, but with the intention of serving the people.

He said public life should be guided by service rather than ambition for positions. According to him, any political responsibility or post, if offered, should be seen as an opportunity to work for the welfare of citizens rather than as a privilege or status symbol.

Madhwaraj further stated that his commitment to public service would continue irrespective of whether he holds any official position within the party or government. He said that even as an ordinary party worker, he would remain active among the people and address public concerns.

Expressing confidence in the BJP leadership, he said party leaders were aware of his work, dedication and commitment to public service, and would take appropriate decisions at the right time based on merit.

He also appealed to the public not to believe rumours circulating on social media and urged people to depend only on official statements and verified information. He cautioned against misinformation that could create unnecessary confusion in political and public discourse.

SAFETY GUIDELINES STRICT

Bhadra river water sports tourism plan announced

CHIKKAMAGALURU

The Tourism Department has proposed developing water adventure sports activities at multiple locations in Chikkamagaluru district, including the Bhadra River and Hemagiri region, to boost tourism and attract visitors throughout the year.

According to officials, the initiative aims to enhance the district's tourism profile by offering activities such as river rafting and kayaking on the Bhadra River. The planned stretch for these activities will extend from Kotehole Bridge to Magundi, where both rafting and kayaking will be permitted under regulated conditions.

Authorities said that the contract for previously operating rafting services has expired, and a fresh tender process has been initiated. The department is seeking experienced operators with trained personnel, including certified diving experts, to ensure safety standards are strictly maintained.

Officials added that strict guidelines will be enforced due to the nature of river currents and monsoon-related water flow variations. The tender process is expected to be completed soon, after which adventure activities are likely to commence.

In addition to the Bhadra River project, water sports activities are also being planned at Vishnusamudra Lake in Kadur taluk near Hemagiri. Since it is a still-water body, boating and other recreational activities are expected to be introduced. Authorities noted that the site also holds religious significance, which could further attract visitors.

The department is also considering expanding water sports to other lakes in later phases, including Ayyanakere, Hirekolale, Madagadakere, Belavadi Lake, and Moogthihalli Lake. At Hirekolale Lake, pedal boats are likely to be used as the water source is also designated for drinking purposes.

Officials said earlier tenders were cancelled due to incomplete documentation from bidders, prompting a re-tender process. Operators will be required to deposit ₹15 lakh as security and comply with all regulatory conditions.

QUICK READ

Tiger battles for life after wire trap injury

CH NEWS, Chikkamagaluru
A tiger is reported to be critically injured after getting trapped in a wire snare and falling in a landslide-affected plantation area near Elunurukhan in Muthodi, Chikkamagaluru district. Forest department officials said the animal was caught in a tightening wire around its body, causing severe injuries and putting its life at risk. The incident was detected through a camera trap installed in the area, where suspected poaching activity is being monitored. Officials have been conducting continuous operations for the past three days and restricted movement of plantation workers and locals in nearby villages as a precautionary measure. The incident has triggered public outrage and calls for urgent rescue and strict action.

Falling tree damages moving auto in accident

CH NEWS, Kodagu
An autorickshaw driver was seriously injured after a tree fell on his moving vehicle near Napoklu in Kodagu district. The driver, identified as Mahmood from Kakkabbe Kunjila village, was transporting passengers from Kakkabe to Nelaji when the incident occurred. A roadside tree reportedly fell from a nearby garden and crashed onto the autorickshaw, severely damaging it. Mahmood sustained serious head injuries and was first treated at Napoklu Community Health Centre before being shifted to a hospital in Mangaluru for further care. Two passengers in the vehicle suffered minor injuries and received treatment locally. Locals helped rescue the injured and clear the debris, while police visited the spot and began investigation.

Lok Adalat seen as key chance for settlement: Mahantesh S

Mahantesh S. said legal awareness is low and urged departments to promote Lok Adalat through wider public publicity

KOPPAL

Senior Civil Judge and Member Secretary of the Koppala District Legal Services Authority, Mahantesh S., has said that the upcoming Rashtriya Lok Adalat will provide a valuable opportunity for people to resolve pending court cases through mutual compromise and conciliation.

He made these remarks while presiding over a pre-meeting of officials from various departments at the District Legal Services Authority office hall on Friday. The National Lok Adalat is scheduled to be held across the state on July 11, and preparations are currently underway to ensure wider participation and awareness among the public.

Mahantesh S. said many people are still not fully aware of legal processes and available settlement options. He stressed the need for all departments to work together to spread awareness about the Lok Adalat system so that more citizens can benefit from it. He also suggested that publicity should be increased through municipal vehicles, bus stands, newspapers and other public platforms to reach a wider audience.

He explained that settling cases through conciliation helps save time, reduces court burden, and also preserves relationships between parties. According to him, the aim this time is to dispose of a larger number of cases with the cooperation of all concerned departments. He added that several types of disputes can be resolved through the Lok Adalat system, including civil cases, land acquisition disputes, bank recovery matters, cheque bounce cases, motor accident compensation claims, matrimonial disputes, and compoundable criminal cases. He noted that when cases are settled through mutual agreement, they end amicably and court fees are also refunded to the parties involved.

Mahantesh S. urged the public to take full advantage of the Lok Adalat scheduled on July 11, describing it as an effective and peaceful method of dispute resolution that benefits both citizens and the justice system.

On the same occasion, discussions were also held regarding the organisation of a workshop on drug addiction prevention in coordination with various departments. The judge expressed concern over the growing spread of drug abuse networks in both urban and developing areas.

He said drugs are increasingly being distributed in deceptive forms, including chocolates and soft drinks, targeting children and youth. He described this as a serious threat to society and urged stronger awareness efforts in schools and colleges to protect young people.

Officials including Additional Superintendent of Police Hemant Kumar, Deputy Director of Prosecution Jagadish, Medical Officer Dr. Prakash, District Jail Officer Amaresh Pujari and Project Director of Child Labour Scheme B. Hire Gowder were present at the meeting.

SIR Jatha held at public grievance meeting in Shivamogga

SHIVAMOGGA

A grievance meeting addressed public issues, while SIR Virodhi Karnataka members held an awareness jatha opposing the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls

A public grievance meeting held in Shivamogga under the leadership of BJP MP B.Y. Raghavendra witnessed the presence of an "SIR Virodhi Karnataka" awareness jatha, drawing attention from attendees and local political circles.

The grievance meeting was organised to address public complaints and issues from residents across the constituency. During the programme, members associated with the SIR Virodhi Karnataka campaign reportedly conducted an awareness jatha opposing the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process of electoral rolls.

The event saw participation from citizens raising civic concerns, while the jatha members distributed information and expressed objections to the SIR exercise, claiming it could affect voter inclusion and electoral transparency. Their presence added a political dimension to what was primarily a grievance redressal platform.

Organisers of the campaign have previously alleged that the SIR process may lead to exclusion of eligible voters, particularly from vulnerable and marginalised communities. However, supporters of the exercise argue that it is intended to ensure accuracy and integrity in voter lists.

MP B.Y. Raghavendra, who chaired the grievance meeting, focused on addressing public issues and receiving petitions from residents. Officials from various departments were present to respond to complaints related to civic amenities, infra structure, and welfare schemes. The convergence of the grievance meeting and the SIR awa reness jatha highlighted ongoing political debate around electoral roll revision in the region.

Dr Prasanna Gowda marks birthday serving workers

MAGADI

Dr Prasanna Gowda, president of the Karnataka State Building and Unorganised Labour Union, celebrated his 32nd birthday in Magadi in a simple and service focused way. He began the day by visiting the Shri Ranganatha Swamy temple and offering special prayers, seeking blessings for workers and their welfare.

Later he distributed fruits to patients at the government hospital in Magadi, spending time with them and wishing them a quick recovery. The celebration also included cutting a birthday cake with supporters, workers, and local leaders who gathered to greet him warmly.

Speaking on the occasion, he said he has been working for over ten years for the rights of unorganised and exploited labourers across the state. He said his mission is to ensure justice, better facilities, and government support for workers, and to continue fighting for their dignity.

Union leaders and supporters praised his efforts and said his birthday reflected his commitment to workers welfare and social service in the region.

Leaders from various organisations including farmers groups labour activists and local representatives attended the event and appreciated his continuous involvement in social and labour related causes in Karnataka. They said his work in organising workers strengthening unions and raising awareness about government welfare schemes has helped many unorganised labour families in different districts.

Speakers also highlighted that his efforts during protests and movements including water canal issues and labour rights campaigns have strengthened the voice of workers across the region. He thanked supporters and said he will continue working for labour justice unity and welfare while promising to fight for workers rights in future across Karnataka.

Woman and pet dog found dead in Shivamogga

SHIVAMOGGA

The body of a 60-year-old woman and her pet dog were found in a decomposed state inside a hou se in Ravindra Nagar, Shivamog ga, after neighbours complained of a foul smell coming from the building. Police said they broke open the door after locals alerted them about the strong odour and suspicion of something wrong inside the house. The deceased was identified as Prabhavathi, wife of Nagaraj, a former edi tor of Janavarthe news paper. Police said she was fou nd in the prayer room while the dog was in the hall.

Her husband had died a few years ago and her thr ee daughters are married and living separately. Neighbours said she used to visit a nearby canteen daily but had not been seen for several days. The body was sent to the mortuary for postmort em examination.

D'Souza said opposition voices are sidelined and urged citizens to protect democracy and remain alert against misuse of power

BJP move anti-democratic, says Ivan D'Souza

MANGALURU

Congress leader and Karnataka MLC Ivan D'Souza on Saturday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of taking an "anti-democratic" stand, alleging that recent political actions by the party reflect a broader attempt to undermine democratic principles.

Addressing media persons in Mangaluru, D'Souza said the BJP's approach on issues related to electoral processes and governance was "undemocratic" and harmful to constitutional values. He claimed that such actions were not in line with the spirit of India's democratic framework.

He alleged that the BJP was attempting to influence electoral systems and public institutions in a manner that weakens transparency and fairness. According to him, democracy is built on equal participation and protection of voting rights, and any move that undermines this balance should be opposed.

D'Souza further said that opposition voices were being sidelined and that dissenting opinions were not being given adequate space in public discourse. He urged citizens to remain alert and safeguard democratic institutions from what he described as "misuse of power."

He also stated that political differences should be addressed through dialogue and constitutional mechanisms rather than confrontation or unilateral decisions. He added that democratic systems thrive only when all stakeholders are treated equally.

The Congress leader reiterated that his party would continue to raise concerns regarding governance, electoral integrity, and public accountability both inside and outside legislative forums.

Party sources said D'Souza's remarks come amid ongoing political debates in Karnataka over electoral processes and administrative decisions, with both ruling and opposition parties exchanging sharp criticism on various issues.

The statement adds to the continuing political exchange between the Congress and BJP in the coastal Karnataka region, where electoral and governance-related issues remain a key point of contention.

Demand raised for restoration of Mulki Memorial

MANGALURU

A demand has been raised for the restoration of the memorial dedicated to Mulki Sundar Ram Shetty in Mulki, Dakshina Kannada, with local voices urging authorities to take immediate steps to preserve the commemorative structure.

The appeal was made during a public discussion reported from the Bappanadu area in Mulki, where residents and community representatives expressed concern over the condition of the memorial and called for its proper upkeep and restoration.

Speakers said that the memorial, which honours noted businessman and community figure Mulki Sundar Ram Shetty, holds historical and cultural significance for the region. They stressed that such structures play an important role in preserving local heritage and inspiring future generations.

Participants alleged that the memorial has not received adequate maintenance over time and urged concerned authorities to undertake restoration work on priority. They also called for better attention to heritage sites in and around Mulki, noting that the coastal town has a rich historical and cultural background.

Community members highlighted that preserving memorials and heritage structures is essential for maintaining public memory and recognising contributions of prominent personalities from the region. They said restoration efforts would also enhance the cultural identity of the area.

The demand is part of a broader set of loca l appeals focused on infrastructure improvement and h eritage conservation in Mulki, which has seen increasing attention in recent years due to its cultural significance and emerging tourism profile.

Residents have urged officials to conduct an inspection of the site and initiate necessary restoration measures at the earliest. They also suggested that local bodies and community organisations work together to ensure long-term maintenance of such memorials.

Student dies after unpaid loan issue case

KARWAR

Police in Karwar have reported a tragic case in Belake village of Bhatkal taluk in Uttara Kannada district where a BCA student ended her life after facing financial stress linked to college fees.

According to police and local reports, the student Gayatri had received ten thousand rupees from her father for college fees but the amount was later lent to an acquaintance who failed to return it on time.

This financial delay prevented her from paying college fees and she was unable to obtain her examination hall ticket, which caused further distress and pressure on her studies. Police said the student was found dead after reportedly jumping into a well in her village, and a case has been registered at Bhatkal Rural Police Station for investigation.

Officials are continuing their inquiry and have urged people to avoid spreading rumours while supporting the family during this difficult time.

Family members said the student was under mental stress due to repeated reminders from college administration and inability to arrange funds on time.

Police have also spoken to the person who had borrowed the money and are verifying the claims regarding repayment failure.

Environmental protection urged at painting event

CHITRADURGA

A painting competition held in Chitradurga on the occasion of World Environment Day saw students being encouraged to think about nature and environmental protection in a creative way. Prizes were distributed to winners at an event organised by the District Legal Services Authority along with district administration and other departments.

Senior Civil Judge and DLSA Member Secretary DJ Sudeen Kumar said a healthy environment is essential for the survival of all living beings. He stressed that not only air but also water, soil and ecological balance must be protected together. He added that World Environment Day should not be limited to a single day celebration and must become a continuous effort throughout life. He urged students and citizens to actively take part in environmental protection activities.

The competition saw students expressing ideas through paintings such as rivers, hills, trees and environmental damage caused by deforestation. Officials said these artworks reflected strong awareness among children about nature and sustainability. More than 200 students from 24 schools participated in the event under the theme Our Future inspired by nature.

In the eighth standard category, R Prabhas from Don Bosco School secured first place, followed by R Amrita of St Joseph School and H Preeti of Vidya Vikasa School. Consolation prizes were also given. In the ninth standard category, A Chitra of Pashrwanath Vidyasariswana won first prize, while K K Harshita and S Vineetendra secured second and third positions respectively.

In the tenth standard category, Manvi A Patil of Jnana Bharati Vidya Mandir won first place, followed by S Spurti and C Chiranjeevi in second and third positions.

Officials present said the event aimed to inspire students to adopt environmentally responsible habits in daily life and contribute to a cleaner and greener future for the next generation across Karnataka.

SAVE-LAND-CAMPAIGN

Gadag farmers take part in land conservation

GADAG

Farmers in Banahatti and Bairanahatti villages of Naragunda taluk in Gadag district took part in a Save Land awareness campaign held on June 12, 2026, under Samyuktashraya initiative with support from ICAR-KH Patil Agricultural Science Centre and Department of Agriculture Gadag.

Agricultural scientist Dr Vinayak Niranjan explained the aim of the campaign, focusing on soil health improvement, recycling farm waste, water conservation, and increasing organic matter in soil to boost beneficial microbes and improve fertility.

Another scientist Dr Chetanababu delivered a technical lecture on biofertilizers, explaining seed treatment methods using Trichoderma, Rhizobium and PSB cultures, along with use of cow-based manure products for better crop growth. Presiding over the event, Gadag Joint Director of Agriculture Ms Chetana Patila highlighted the global fertilizer crisis and urged farmers to adopt alternative fertilizers and sustainable farming practices for long-term benefits.

Officials also distributed improved seeds of pulses like green gram and pigeon pea for demonstration purposes, while Assistant Agriculture Director SF Belavatigi welcomed participants and Sivananda Sathe delivered the vote of thanks.

A total of more than 200 farmers including women farmers participated in the programme and gained awareness about soil conservation, organic farming and sustainable agriculture practices promoted during the campaign.

Organizers said the campaign will continue in nearby villages to strengthen farmer knowledge and promote eco-friendly agriculture practices aimed at improving soil quality and ensuring sustainable food production in coming years.

QUICK READ

Kalagi Madara Mahasabha appoints new leaders

CH NEWS, Kalaburagi New appointments were announced in Madara Mahasabha of Kalagi Taluk, where Revanasiddappa Kattimani has been named Taluk President and Ravi Singe Arankal as General Secretary. District President Gopalarao Kattimani issued the order letter confirming the changes. He said the organisation will soon launch a large membership registration drive across district and taluk levels. He also stated that newly appointed taluk leaders will select additional office bearers in the coming days. The aim is to strengthen local organi sational structure and expand participation.

Gadag to host Rajput Samaj Pratap Jayanti

CH NEWS, Gadag The Rajput Samaj of Gadag Betageri is preparing to celebrate the 486th birth anniversary of Veer Maharana Pratap with a grand Jayanti program on Wednesday, 17th June at 9 am in a mandapa near Balaji Road. The program will be presided over by Rajput Samaj president Ganesh Singh Bally. Senior doctors Dr Beam singh V. Samorekar and Dr Happy AG Shah will attend as chief guests. Retired principal S. A. Jamadar will deliver a lecture on the life and ideals of Maharana Pratap. The event will begin at 8 am with flag hoisting at Balaji temple followed by worship ceremonies at local circles. Students who cleared SSLC, PUC and graduation exams from the Rajput Samaj will receive talent awards during the program. The society has invited the public to participate and make the celebration meaningful and successful. Organisers said the celebration aims to promote unity, respect for history and inspiration from Maharana Pratap's bra very while strengthening cultural values among youth and encouraging community participation in social and educational activities across Gadag region.

Surjewala criticises new diesel sale restriction

Surjewala says diesel costs Rs 95-97 at pumps versus Rs 135-140 bulk, warning farmers during sowing season impact

BENGALURU

The central government has banned the sale of bulk diesel above 200 liters at petrol pumps, a move that has sparked strong criticism from Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala, who said it will hurt common people, farmers, and small businesses. He said on Saturday that the Union Petroleum Ministry issued an order on June 12, 2026, stopping sale of more than 200 liters of diesel at petrol pumps. Anyone needing more must buy from bulk suppliers at higher rates.

According to Surjewala, diesel at pumps costs about Rs 95 to Rs 97 per liter, while bulk purchase costs Rs 135 to Rs 140, creating a gap of nearly Rs 40 per liter. He warned that farmers will be the first affected as sowing season begins and each farmer uses around

300 liters per acre, making diesel needs very high for cultivation.

If a farmer has five acres, he may need about 1,500 liters of diesel per crop, which now becomes much more expensive due to the new pricing rules.

Surjewala also said city residents in apartments will be affected as they use generators for power during outages and often purchase large quantities of diesel for backup. Transport costs are also expected to rise, as buses and trucks using large fuel tanks will face higher diesel prices, which will likely increase fares and prices of daily goods.Small and medium industries depending on generators due to limited power supply will also face higher expenses, which may increase the cost of products in the market.

In his statement, Surjewala accused the BJP of hiding the impact of the decision and said it will increase the financial burden on the common man. He called for people to question the government, saying this issue is not just political but a fight for the survival of household budgets across the country.

The controversy continues as debate grows over fuel pricing policies and their impact on ordinary citizens across India, with opposition leaders demanding a review of the order and urging the government to reconsider the restrictions on bulk diesel purchases immediately without delay nationwide impact.

Kalaburagi college roof collapse triggers SFI–DYFI protest

KALABURAGI

Strong protests were held by SFI and DYFI activists in Kalaburagi condemning the collapse of a college building roof that injured several students and raising concerns over the safety of government educational institutions.

The protestors gathered in the city carrying placards and raising slogans against what they described as negligence by the authorities in maintaining public infrastructure. They demanded immediate compensation for the injured students and urged the government to ensure proper rehabilitation and free medical treatment for those affected in the incident.

Activists alleged that the government has repeatedly failed to carry out timely repairs and structural audits of educational buildings despite several warnings. They said the latest roof collapse incident is a reflection of poor maintenance and lack of accountability in the higher education department. The organisations insisted that responsibility

Activists allege government ignored repeated warnings, failed audits and repairs of educational buildings, calling the roof collapse evidence of negligence and demanding accountability and action

should be fixed on officials concerned and disciplinary action should be initiated against those found negligent.

The protest also highlighted the need for a comprehensive safety audit of all government colleges and schools in the district. Activists demanded that unsafe buildings be either demolished or immediately repaired to prevent further accidents. They warned that students should not be forced to study in unsafe classrooms where their lives are at risk.

Leaders of SFI and DYFI stated that education should not be compromised due to infrastructural failure and accused the authorities of ignoring repeated complaints from students and faculty members. They further demanded adequate compensation for the injured students and financial assistance to their families.

They also called for a long-term plan to upgrade educational infrastructure across Kalaburagi district, including regular inspections, maintenance funding, and strict monitoring mechanisms.

The protest concluded with a warning that stronger agitation would be launched if the government fails to act promptly on their demands.

22,000 teacher posts vacant in Kalyana Karnataka region

KALABURAGI

Strong criticism has been raised over the alleged negligence of the state government as nearly 22,000 teacher posts remain vacant across government schools in the Kalyana Karnataka region, severely affecting the quality of education and academic progress of students.

Addressing the issue in Kalaburagi, education rights activist Dhanaraj expressed serious concern over the large-scale vacancies in primary and secondary schools. He said that despite the implementation of the special constitutional provision under Article 371(J), the region continues to face a severe shortage of teachers, particularly in rural and backward areas.

He alleged that the government has failed to take timely action to fill vacant posts, resulting in declining standards in government schools. According to him, many schools are being forced to rely on a single teacher handling multiple classes, which is negatively impacting students' learning outcomes and classroom management. Reports indicate that more than 22,000 teaching positions are currently unfilled in the region, forcing several institutions to depend heavily on guest and temporary teachers. Education experts have also pointed out that such arrangements are not sufficient to maintain academic quality in government schools.

Dhanaraj accused the government of continuous delay in recruitment processes and said that this negligence is widening the educational gap between urban and rural students. He demanded immediate initiation of recruitment procedures to fill all vacant posts without further delay. He also urged the government to introduce a special educational package for Kalyana Karnataka to address long-standing disparities in infrastructure, staffing, and academic performance.

Tulu activists demand devpt corporation in Karkala

KARKALA

In a renewed push to preserve and promote Tulu language and culture, senior Congress leader Uday Shetty Muniyal from Karkala has submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, seeking the formation of a dedicated Tulu Development Corporation. The memorandum, submitted on Friday, urged the state government to take immediate steps to safeguard the linguistic and cultural identity of the Tulu-speaking population in coastal Karnataka. It also called for financial support to establish a modern Tulu Bhavan in Karkala. Describing Tulu as one of the oldest Dravidian languages with a rich cultural heritage, Shetty Muniyal warned that rapid globalization and changing socio-economic trends are posing a threat to regional languages and traditions.

Mahalakshmi Temple hosts Vachanamrita book distribution programme

KALABURAGI

A religious programme was held at Sri Mahalakshmi Temple in Swastika Nagar of Kalaburagi on June 13, 2026, where 33 Vachanamrita books were distributed to devotees on the occasion of the leap month.

Secretary of Andagi Foundation Rekha Andagi said the programme included distribution of 33 Vachanamrita books and devotional bhajans at the temple, where devotees offered prayers and participated in special singing sessions.

Several members of the Mahalakshmi Bhajan Board and local dignitaries participated in the event, including Kamala B Rajeshwari Dengi, Indumati Guggavad, Gurusiddamma Patil, Shantabai Halmata, Neelambika Mangashetty and others who supported the programme. The gathering highlighted religious unity and cultural devotion in Swastika Nagar as residents joined prayers and community activities. The temple, which has been serving de votees for nearly 15 years, continues to see active participation from the Pandit family, with Shi vraj Andagi noting the importance of preserving spiritual traditions through such programmes. The organisers said the event aimed to spread awareness of vachana literature and encourage devotion among younger generations in the region while promoting community harmony and spiritual learning.

Department plans panchayat elections by year-end, strengthens decentralisation, warns contractors delaying Jal Jeevan Mission and road works

Eshwar Khandre warns action on manual scavenging

DEVANAHALLI

Rural Development Minister Eshwar Khandre has directed that no latrine in the state should be cleaned manually by workers. He warned that if manual cleaning is found, strict action will be taken under law. He said cleaning must be done only using machines. The government will buy jetting and sucking machines for this work.

He also said that a fecal waste treatment plant plan was made earlier when he served as Municipal Administration Minister. Such plants will also be built at the Panchayat level to manage waste better.

He ordered that all government properties under Bengaluru Rural Zilla Panchayat should be geotagged. He said rural land is very valuable and geotagging will prevent encroachment and ensure proper records. The department plans to conduct elections for all Panchayats whose terms have ended, and polls will be held by the end of this year. He added that decentralization will be strengthened and contractors delaying works like Jal Jeevan Mission and road projects will get notices to speed up completion.

Minister Eshwar Khandre said the government is committed to improving cleanliness, transparency, and faster development in rural areas. He appealed to officials to work responsibly and ensure all schemes reach people on time. He also stressed that public property must be protected and maintained for long term benefit of citizens across the state. He said accountability will be strictly enforced always in system.

Hatti Gold Mine black flag protest enters day 11

RAICHUR

The black flag protest staged by workers and local stakeholders at the Hatti Gold Mine in Raichur district continued for the 11th consecutive day on Friday, intensifying concerns over administrative delays and unresolved demands.

The protest has been ongoing against what the agitators describe as the "deliberate delay and neglect" by the mine management and the government in addressing long-pending issues. Demonstrators have been raising slogans and displaying black flags to express their dissatisfaction, insisting that authorities take immediate action on their grievances.

According to the protesters, several key demands related to service conditions, administrative decisions, and welfare measures have remained unaddressed for a long time. They alleged that repeated representations submitted to the management and govt departments have not resulted in any concrete response, forcing them to continue their agitation.

Workers said the protest will be intensified if authorities fail to initiate meaningful dialogue. They claimed that the lack of urgency from officials has increased frustration among employees and local families dependent on the mining operations for livelihood. Union representatives participating in the agitation stated that the protest is being conducted in a peaceful manner but warned that it could expand further if their demands are ignored. They also accused the administration of adopting a "wait and delay" approach instead of resolving issues through negotiations.

Devotees protest in Puttur seeking action against professor

MANGALURU

A group of devotees of Lord Rama staged a protest in Puttur and submitted a complaint to the police, demanding strict legal action against Professor Bhagavan for alleged derogatory remarks about Lord Ramachandra.

The devotees first visited Sri Mahalingeshwara Temple in Puttur, where they offered prayers and sought divine justice for what they described as an insult to Lord Rama. Later, they marched on foot to the Puttur City Police Station, raising slogans and demanding the professor's arrest.

The protesters alleged that Prof. Bhagavan has repeatedly made objectionable statements about Lord Rama, which they claim hurt religious sentiments and disturb social harmony. They further accused him of spreading misinformation through his remarks.

According to the complainants, the professor had earlier also made similar statements in 2024, prompting a police complaint at that time as well.

Landslide near Vamanjur causes panic among motorists

MANGALURU

Motorists were left alarmed after a portion of the Kethikallu hill near the national highway close to Vamanjur on the outskirts of Mangaluru collapsed again following heavy rains.

The hill section, which lies along the Mangaluru–Moodbidri highway expansion route, has reportedly been unstable for the past three to four years. Locals said the area was excavated during highway widening works, leading to repeated landslides during every monsoon season.

Officials had earlier attempted stabilisation by spraying a cement mixture over the slope. However, the recent rainfall caused the protective layer to weaken and collapse along with soil, which slid onto the road, disrupting traffic movement.Following the incident, authorities initiated clearance operations to remove the debris from the road. Vehicular movement has been restricted to one side to ensure safety and allow restoration work to continue.

INFRASTRUCTURE GROWTH PUSH

Fourth phase of urban works to begin soon

RAMANAGARA

Municipal Council President K. Seshadri Shashi has said that the fourth phase of the Chief Minister Amrita Urban Development Project will be launched on June 17, marking the next stage of development work in the city.

He made the announcement during a press conference held at the Municipal Council premises on Saturday. He said that Rs 12 crore has been sanctioned for the Ramanagara Municipal Council under the Amrita City Development Project, and the new phase of works will begin on Wednesday.

He further said that the Municipal Council has approved an action plan for works worth Rs 13.32 crore under various development schemes. According to him, the implementation includes 17.15 per cent work under the SCSP scheme, 6.95 per cent under the TSP scheme, 5 per cent under welfare schemes for other backward sections, and 5 per cent under special welfare programmes, along with several projects under general grants.

Seshadri Shashi said the ongoing and proposed works under the Amrita Nagarothana project are expected to resolve issues related to underground drainage in several areas. He added that priority has been given to selected residential localities facing long-standing civic problems, and the aim is to complete these works within the current tenure of the council.

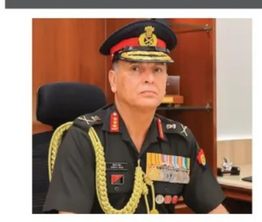
He also highlighted that several development initiatives have already been implemented to improve Ramanagara and transform it into a model municipality in the state. He said Rs 2 crore has been allocated for the development of the road in front of the Old Mysore–Bengaluru highway stretch, which is one of the major roads in the region.

He added that construction of a clock tower along the same route is also in progress and the council has planned to inaugurate it during its present term. According to him, these projects are part of a broader effort to improve urban infrastructure and public facilities in the city.

Speaking about political support for development, he said that leaders including Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar have shown interest in the growth of Ramanagara. He recalled discussions during election campaigns and said that development of the town has remained a consistent focus for the leadership.

He also mentioned a recent meeting with the Chief Minister about a month and a half ago and said that further interactions are expected soon. He added that the Municipal Council would continue to invite the Chief Minister for upcoming programmes in Ramanagara.

QUICK READ



Lt General Seth named next Army Chief

New Delhi

Lt General Dhiraj Seth has been appointed as the next Chief of Army Staff by the government and will take charge on June 30. He is currently serving as Vice Chief of the Army Staff, a post he took in April this year. He will succeed General Upendra Dwivedi upon retirement. A decorated officer, he has served in key command roles across deserts, Jammu and Kashmir, and major Army formations. He is an alumnus of NDA and joined the Armoured Corps in 1986. He also commanded Sudarshan Chakra Corps, South Western Command and Southern Command during his long distinguished service.

Bomb threat email hits Lufthansa-Hyderabad flight

Hyderabad

Security officials received a bomb threat email for a Lufthansa flight traveling from Frankfurt to Hyderabad on Saturday, triggering immediate alerts and safety checks. Authorities have not shared further details, but security agencies are reviewing the situation and investigating the source of the message. Earlier, a similar threat email sent to Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Shamshabad on May 16 was declared a hoax after thorough security checks found nothing suspicious. Police registered a case and continue investigation while airport security remains on high alert to ensure passenger safety and prevent any disruption to operations across international flight routes system.

Delhi court rejects relief in Jaipur Polo case

New Delhi

Delhi court has refused to give interim relief to the Indian Polo Association in the Jaipur Polo Ground eviction case, clearing the way for the Centre's order. The court said there will be no stay on eviction from the Race Course area in the national capital. It follows a June 12 order posted online after which officials of the Land and Development Office under the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry took possession of the 15.20-acre ground case was heard by Additional Sessions Judge Dhirender Rana on an application filed by IPA seeking a stay under the Public Premises Eviction Act 1971.

Kirti Azad blasts BJP over raids

'Old method of BJP': TMC leader hits out over CID raids against Mitra, Banerjee

NEW DELHI

A fresh political controversy erupted on Saturday after search operations carried out by central and state agencies led to sharp exchanges between leaders of the ruling party and the opposition in West Bengal.

Trinamool Congress MP Kirti Azad strongly criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party following raids conducted by the Enforcement Directorate at properties linked to senior party leader Madan Mitra. At the same time, a police team from West Midnapore carried out searches at the residence of Trinamool National General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee in connection with an investigation involving his executive assistant, Sumit Roy.

The Enforcement Directorate conducted simultaneous raids at several locations in Kolkata and nearby districts as part of its probe into the alleged cash-for-municipal jobs case. Among the places searched were two residences connected to Madan Mitra, the Trinamool legislator representing the Kamarhati Assembly constituency.

Reacting to the developments, Kirti Azad claimed that opposition parties were often subjected to investigations and raids. He described such actions as an old political strategy and alleged that these operations were aimed at creating pressure on opposition leaders.

Azad further stated that the focus on raids and investigations diverted public attention from important national concerns. He mentioned issues such as rising prices, unemployment and the controversy surrounding the NEET examination paper leak. According to him, these matters deserved greater public discussion and scrutiny.

The Trinamool MP also raised questions regarding BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari. He referred to allegations linked to the Narada sting operation and asked what progress had been made in cases involving leaders who later joined the BJP. Azad questioned whether investigations against certain political figures had lost momentum over time.The Narada sting operation, which became public in 2016, allegedly showed several political leaders accepting money from individuals posing as representatives of a fictitious company.

At that time, Suvendu Adhikari was a Trinamool Congress MP. The Central Bureau of Investigation had sought permission to prosecute several leaders named in the matter.

The latest raids have once again intensified the political battle in West Bengal, with both sides trading accusations as investigations continue and public attention remains firmly focused on the unfolding developments.

Akhilesh raises fears of Bengal-style 'poll loot' in UP elections

NEW DELHI

A fresh political confrontation has erupted in Uttar Pradesh after Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav expressed concerns about possible electoral manipulation in the 2027 Assembly elections.

His remarks triggered strong reactions from Bharatiya Janata Party leaders, who dismissed the allegations and accused him of preparing excuses ahead of a potential defeat.

Akhilesh Yadav recently claimed that elections in states such as Bihar and West Bengal were influenced through unfair practices and warned that similar developments in Uttar Pradesh could damage public trust in the democratic process. He made these comments while addressing a public gathering during the inauguration of Urmila Garden in Kasganj district.

The Samajwadi Party leader also criticised initiatives such as the Special Intensive Revision campaign, alleging that they could be used to influence the electoral process. In addition, he accused the BJP of misleading women voters through promises linked to the Women's Reservation Bill.

Responding to the allegations, Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak rejected the claims and described them as an attempt to protect the opposition's image before the next election. According to him, leaders of the Samajwadi Party and Congress were making such statements because they were already sensing a difficult political battle ahead.

Pathak further accused opposition parties of adopting double standards regarding the Election Commission. He stated that when opposition parties win elections, they praise the electoral system, but when results are unfavourable, they question the credibility of the process. He argued that such remarks were intended to create a narrative before voting begins.

The BJP leader also criticised the previous governments led by the Samajwadi Party and Congress in Uttar Pradesh. He claimed that those administrations were marked by law-and-order challenges and the influence of criminal elements. According to him, the current government has worked to improve governance and public safety across the state.

Uttar Pradesh Minority Welfare Minister Danish Ansari also attacked the Samajwadi Party, alleging that it frequently opposes development initiatives undertaken by the state government. He said the BJP administration remains committed to providing transparent governance and maintaining law and order.

With political temperatures already rising ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections, the latest exchange of accusations highlights the intense battle expected between the ruling BJP and the opposition in the months to come.

AIADMK begins statewide push to regain strength

CHENNAI

After suffering its worst electoral setback in more than fifty years, the AIADMK is preparing a major outreach programme across Tamil Nadu.

The party plans to hold district-wise consultations with office-bearers, local leaders, and grassroots workers to understand what went wrong in the 2026 Assembly elections and how it can rebuild public support.

Senior party functionaries said the exercise is expected to begin after the current Assembly session concludes. Leaders believe the discussions will help gather honest opinions from workers across districts while ensuring that legislative duties remain unaffected. With the Governor scheduled to address the Assembly on June 18 and proceedings expected to continue for several days, preparations are likely to move forward soon after that period.

Many supporters feel the review should encourage open conversations about campaign weaknesses, organisational gaps and voter concerns. Political observers say a detailed assessment is important because the party must prepare for upcoming by-elections in five Assembly constituencies and local body polls expected within the next eight months.

They argue that understanding the reasons behind the decline will be essential for improving strategy, rebuilding confidence and reconnecting with key voter groups across the state again.

Election data shows that the AIADMK won only 47 constituencies in the recent election.

The party finished second in 44 seats and third in 81 constituencies.

Researchers, however, note that several of these areas still

offer growth opportunities. Among the seats where it placed second, the party secured at least 30 per cent votes in 28 constituencies. Similarly, in another 32 constituencies where it came third, it received 25 per cent or more votes, suggesting that recovery remains possible with focused efforts.Constituencies such as Kancheepuram, Katpadi, Vandavasi, Kallakurichi, Veppanahalli, Udumalpet, Thuraiyur, Poompuhar, Sholavandan and Srivaikuntam have been identified as places where the party can strengthen its presence.

UP minister flays Yadav over foreign trips tourism

NEW DELHI

Uttar Pradesh minister OP Rajbhar criticized Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav for his foreign trips and asked him to focus on India first.

Rajbhar said in a post on X that leaders should explore their own states before visiting London and Paris and connect with roots.

He also mocked Akhilesh for having aristocratic tastes and asked if he enjoyed qawwalis during family trips abroad.

If he travelled in Uttar Pradesh places like Kashi, Ayodhya, Mathura, Naimish and Vindhyavasini shrine could boost local economy and help small traders.

Rajbhar added that such visits would support local vendors transport workers and hoteliers while also boosting tourism through media attention.

Opposition questions Rajnath Singh's Indus water warning

NEW DELHI

Opposition leaders on Saturday questioned Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's remarks that Indus waters would not reach Pakistan-linked terror supporters, saying the government was sending mixed signals on the Indus Water Treaty.

Rajnath Singh, speaking at an intellectuals meet in Hyderabad said India had warned Pakistan that repeated terror attacks would lead to strong steps, including restricting water flows under the treaty after the Pahalgam attack.

He said the government had kept the treaty in abeyance and would not allow Sindhu river waters to benefit what he called sponsors of terrorism and enemies of humanity.

Opposition reactions followed quickly. Samajwadi Party MP Rajeev Rai said the government was confusing people by claiming the treaty was only suspended, not fully ended, raising doubts about its intent.

JMM spokesperson Manoj Pandey said the announcement was only political messaging, arguing that real relations with Pakistan remained

unchanged despite strong public statements.

BJP spokesperson R. P. Singh defended the government, saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi had already made it clear that not a single drop of Indus waters would go to Pakistan and preparations were underway.

He added that India's position was firm and questioned why the country's water resources should benefit Pakistan amid terrorism concerns.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs reiterated that the Indus Water Treaty remains in abeyance until Pakistan stops cross-border terrorism, while India continues to respond strongly to such issues.Officials also said India's recent statements follow its stand that water and security cannot be separated, while diplomatic tensions continue with Pakistan over cross-border terrorism and river sharing disputes in the region.

Municipality chair arrested over record burning case

KOLKATA

The West Bengal Police have arrested Prabodh Sarkar, Chairperson of Ashoknagar-Kalyangarh Municipality, over allegations of burning official municipal records at his residence.

The incident took place late Friday night after locals saw a fire in the garden and alerted authorities, leading to police action following complaints.

Members of Bharatiya Janata Party claimed that important documents linked to the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana housing scheme were being destroyed to hide irregularities.

Police entered the premises after scaling a boundary wall as the gate was locked. Sarkar later claimed he was burning dry leaves, while BJP alleged that identity cards and official records were destroyed.

Opposition leaders further alleged that the act was linked to irregularities under the housing scheme and accused the civic body chief of attempting to destroy evidence. BJP leaders said residents first informed them after noticing the fire and that

they rushed to the spot, demanding a full investigation.

Police arrested Sarkar and took him into custody for questioning, while an investigation into alleged destruction of records is underway.

The Trinamool Congress said it is monitoring the situation, while the Bharatiya Janata Party continued to allege corruption in local bodies. Authorities stated that strict action will be taken if wrongdoing is proven, and the case remains under detailed probe in the district administration and police departments.

Officials also confirmed that records recovery efforts are continuing across municipal offices.

BJP HITS BACK AT SANJAY RAUT REMARKS

NEW DELHI

BJP on Saturday strongly reacted to remarks made by Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing the opposition INDIA bloc of repeatedly targeting him due to electoral failures.

BJP national spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari posted on X, saying criticism of the Prime Minister is an insult to the mandate of 1.4 Indians and reflects frustration within opposition parties. In a video statement, Bhandari alleged that leaders of the INDIA alliance are attacking PM Modi to protect their political interests and family based politics.

He said Sanjay Raut's comments were part of a pattern where opposition leaders allegedly insult Modi and other top BJP leaders including Amit Shah to gain attention.

Raut speaking in Pune had earlier claimed that politics under Modi and Amit Shah had increased intolerance and said some BJP leaders stay silent due to fear of investigative agencies.

Reacting strongly, the BJP said such statements weaken democratic discourse and disrespect the popular mandate given to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in successive elections. It added that opposition leaders should focus on constructive politics rather than personal attacks and social media remarks. The party also reiterated that leadership of Modi has brought stability and development, while accusing the INDIA bloc of spreading misinformation for political gains.

Delhi court hears bail pleas of Imam, Khalid

NEW DELHI

The court on Saturday issued notice seeking response from Delhi Police on fresh bail pleas filed by Sharjeel Imam and Umar Khalid in the larger conspiracy case linked to the 2020 riots. It directed the police to file its reply and listed the matter for hearing on July 4.

The two accused have moved regular bail pleas under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and other provisions. Imam argued that despite six months since Supreme Court rejected bail in January, trial has seen no real progress. His plea said charge framing arguments are still not complete and he has remained in custody for nearly six years. Khalid has also sought regular bail before the trial court and both pleas were heard together.

Earlier Supreme Court rejected bail pleas of both accused under UAPA citing statutory restrictions. It however granted bail to five other accused in the same case.

Recently the Supreme Court granted interim bail to two accused for six months due to long incarceration and delay in trial and referred broader legal question to larger Bench.

The court also noted differing views among benches on interpretation of the Najeeb ruling in bail matters under stringent laws. It said the matter should be placed before the Chief Justice for constitution of appropriate bench while keeping merits open.

With fresh notices issued, attention now turns to whether both accused will seek relief or appear before the trial court, while proceedings in the long running case continue under stringent anti terror law provisions and judicial scrutiny remains active as hearings proceed in coming weeks.

BANGALORE URBAN ZILLA PANCHAYATH
Office of the Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, First Floor, Zilla Panchayat Building, S. Kariyappa Road, Banashankari (Near Banashankari Temple), Bengaluru-560070

KPPP TENDER NOTICE
Single Cover System
Tender Notification No.: EE/PRED/BNG(U)/ TND/AE-2/17/2026-27 Date: 12.06.2026

Tenders are invited through KPPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D. Bangalore Urban, for Fixing of Rate tender. The work details can obtained from the KPPP Web Site. The tender documents can be obtained and submitted on or before dated: **29.06.2026** upto **4:00 p.m.** Further details can be obtained from web site at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact this office during office working hours.

Sd/-, Executive Engineer,
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division,
Bangalore Urban Dist., Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/LC/1154/2026-27

Government of Karnataka
The Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Hassan Division, Hassan.
No: EE/PWD/HSN/JE-05/2026-27/ DATED: 11.06.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION NO: 14/2026-27, Dated:11.06.2026

Tender is invited by the Public Works Department on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000, Standard Tender Document KW-1, KW-2 &KW-3 from the eligible registered Contractors of Karnataka PWD and the contractors belonging to Scheduled caste, Scheduled Tribe & Category-2(A) shall be domicile of the State of Karnataka for more than 10 years. Tenders Invited through E-Procurement for total Number of 6 Works under PWD Hassan Division. In that 02 works are reserved for scheduled caste contractors, 01 works are reserved for scheduled tribe contractors and 01 work is reserved for category-2A contractors. The minimum estimated amount is Rs.25.00 Lakhs and maximum estimated amount is Rs.100.00 Lakhs. The amount mentioned in tender notification is sanctioned estimated cost, but EMD & class of contractor is considered based on amount put to tender which excludes GST & other charges. Last date & time for receipt of tender is on 01.07.2026 @ 16.00 hours. For more details visit https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in or contact this office through Phone No. 08172-268437 or in person during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD,
Hassan Division, Hassan.

ವಾಸಾಸಂ೧/ಹಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/228/ಕೆಎಸ್ ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026–27

QUICK READ

Police seize hybrid cannabis worth lakhs in Gujarat

Vadodara

Vadodara police seized hybrid cannabis worth Rs 86.31 lakh from a flat in Alkapuri area after a raid by the Anti Narcotics Task Force based on intelligence. Officers recovered 2.466 kg of cannabis, cash of Rs 3.36 lakh, a weighing scale and a cash counting machine. The accused Shahidkhan Pathan was absconding and a case was registered under NDPS Act with investigation ongoing. Police said the total value of seized property is about Rs 89.69 lakh and further investigation has been handed over to Akota Police Station in Vadodara district.

HuT activities under scanner in South India

New Delhi

Indian agencies are investigating the activities of Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HuT), focusing on its growing online presence and alleged efforts to influence youth in South India. Officials say financial links and encrypted communications are also under review. Agencies are coordinating with international counterparts to trace funding sources and related networks. The probe follows concerns about attempts to expand influence through digital platforms and recruitment narratives. Authorities have not confirmed immediate operational threats but continue monitoring developments closely. Earlier cases involving alleged operatives in Chennai are also part of ongoing review and historical context of investigations. Officials say probe remains active nationwide now

Odisha officer held over lover's death case

CUTTACK

Police in Cuttack have arrested Odisha Administrative Service officer Bhimsen Prasad Tudu after the death of third-year MBBS student Chandrika Hembram, whose body was found in the Kathajodi river. Her family alleges she was murdered after a long 14-year relationship that began in school. They claim Tudu distanced himself after joining service and made remarks about her complexion. The victim had undergone cosmetic treatment. Police said digital evidence, laptops and chat records are under examination. Earlier findings suggested drowning, but investigators are now probing possible foul play. The accused is being questioned while further investigation continues.

Yogi orders FIR on trolling remarks case

'Dignity in public speech is important; none should make derogatory remarks about anyone's daughter or sister'

AZAMGARH

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed police to register an FIR against people accused of posting objectionable comments about Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav's daughter on social media.

He said dignity in public speech is important and no one should make derogatory remarks about anyone's daughter or sister, adding that such behaviour is unacceptable and will face strict action.

Speaking at an event in Azamgarh on Saturday the Chief Minister said he came to know about the incident through social media and immediately ordered police action without delay.

He also advised Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav to control party workers and ensure disciplined language in political discourse saying he should guide his supporters more responsibly.The controversy began after a social media post allegedly made false and offensive claims about Akhilesh Yadav's daughter leading to FIRs against multiple individuals under cyber and criminal laws.

Police have started investigation in several districts and cyber crime teams are examining the case while officials say strict action will continue against those responsible.

Officials said the chief minister has taken a strong stand on maintaining dignity in political discourse and warned that strict action will be taken against anyone spreading hate or false content online. He also reiterated that social media must not be used to target family members of political leaders.

Authorities added that the investigation is ongoing and further legal steps will follow based on evidence collected. The state government has asked cyber teams to trace the origin of the posts and ensure accountability.

Citizens have been urged to act responsibly online and avoid spreading rumours or offensive remarks.

Multiple complaints against Abhishek Banerjee filed

KOLKATA

Two separate complaints have been filed against Abhishek Banerjee at police stations in West Bengal over different allegations by individuals from Siliguri and South 24 Parganas districts.

The first complaint was lodged at Siliguri Cyber Police Station under Darjeeling district alleging that statements during election rallies were meant to incite post poll violence.

A second complaint was filed at Bishnupur Police Station by Bharatiya Janata Party leader Avijit Das accusing corruption in cyclone relief distribution after Cyclone Amphan. Complainant has requested a Special Investigation Team probe into alleged misuse of relief funds and irregularities during post disaster assistance operations in the state.

The Trinamool Congress leader is also facing multiple investigations by CID and Enforcement Directorate in separate cases linked to legislative document discrepancies and alleged corruption. He will appear before CID on June 14, Enforcement Directorate on June 15, and again CID on June 16 for questioning in three different cases.

Police officials said all complaints will be examined as per law and investigations will proceed independently based on evidence and statements recorded from witnesses.The matter has added fresh political tension between Trinamool Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party as opposition leaders continue to target Abhishek Banerjee while the ruling party defends him and links the attacks to electoral politics.

Rahul Gandhi starts campaign against paper leaks

NEW DELHI

Congress on Saturday announced first phase of a nationwide campaign led by senior leader Rahul Gandhi against paper leaks, examination irregularities and unemployment, accusing the Narendra Modi government of systematic betrayal of India youth.

The month long outreach programme will include student conventions across major cities seeking accountability for recurring exam irregularities and demanding resignation of Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan and a parliamentary discussion on rights and future of students and job aspirants.

Rahul Gandhi is set to conduct a series of student conventions in several cities over a month starting with Kota on June 17 Allahabad on July 10 Patna on July 11 and concluding in Delhi on July 14 aiming to bring together students job aspirants youth organisations and educators affected by examination scandals.

The Congress said the campaign will demand decentralisation of NEET abolition of examination fees and strict legal action against those involved in paper leak networks along with a call for resignation of the education minister and a comprehensive parliamentary discussion on the crisis facing India youth. Having repeatedly raised these issues Rahul Gandhi has positioned the defence of merit fairness and equal opportunity as a national priority while the party plans mobilisation through NSUI Youth Congress state district and local units across the country. It will also use physical and digital invitations campus outreach interactions at coaching centres universities schools and youth hubs along with social media campaigns live screenings and direct engagement with students to build a nationwide movement focused on accountability fairness and opportunities for young people across India.

The party stated that the initiative aims to unite students beyond political lines and provide a platform for young people to share experiences raise concerns and demand stronger reforms in the examination and recruitment system while also pushing for greater transparency accountability and equal access to education and employment opportunities in the country.

Congress leaders said the campaign reflects concern for youth and will continue across India in coming months aiming to strengthen education system and ensure fair opportunities for every student in the country.

Medical student sent on forced leave

MUMBAI

Sejal Pawar, a final year MBBS student at KEM Hospital in Mumbai, has been sent on 15-day forced leave after remarks made during a stand-up comedy show sparked controversy and a formal probe.

The hospital said a fact-finding committee found her comments about male cadavers and anatomy training objectionable and insensitive, not matching expected professional conduct.

An additional five-member committee has been set up to take a final decision within one week, while the interim leave continues as a precautionary step.

The remarks, made during a recorded show around three months ago, also led to online backlash and a cyber police case involving Pawar, comedian Pranit More, and another participant.

She has issued an unconditional apology, while doctors' association members said online criticism had turned into harassment even as they admitted the comments were inappropriate.

Police in Maharashtra have booked all involved and the National Commission for Women has also called for explanations from some participants.

The institute has asked her parents to attend counselling as the investigation continues into the incident and the wider debate on medical professionalism.

Authorities said the matter is under review and a final disciplinary outcome will be announced after committee findings.

The case has triggered debate on student responsibility, freedom of speech, and professional ethics in medical education across institutions, while officials stress the need for sensitivity in public remarks going forward in Mumbai.

President calls IMA parade as historic moment

DEHRADUN

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday reviewed the Passing Out Parade of the 158th Regular Course and 141st Technical Graduate Course at the Indian Military Academy in Dehradun. She expressed special happiness at the participation of women cadets and called their inclusion a landmark moment in the academy's history.

The President congratulated all officer cadets for completing one of the toughest military training programmes in the country and said their courage and wisdom will guide their future service. Officials said nine women cadets took part in the parade, marking an important step toward greater gender inclusion in the armed forces.

The President said this development reflects India's progress towards women led development and expected more women to join the academy in the coming years. She also appreciated cadets from friendly foreign countries who completed training alongside Indian cadets at the academy.

Murmu said their participation reflects India's commitment to global cooperation and stronger defence ties with partner nations. She told the newly commissioned officers that they carry a sacred responsibility to protect the nation's sovereignty unity and integrity on behalf of 140 crore citizens.

The President also urged officers to remain adaptive in a changing security environment and to embrace lifelong learning and ethical leadership. She emphasized that modern armed forces must stay future ready and respond effectively to new technological and strategic challenges.

Murmu further advised officers to lead from the front care for soldiers and uphold the highest traditions of the armed forces while ensuring operational readiness.

Kanimozhi demands action in Salem case probe

CHENNAI

DMK leader and MP Kanimozhi has called for strict action and a full investigation into a sexual harassment case reported in Salem in Tamil Nadu. She reacted after reports of a man allegedly assaulting a woman and threatening to release private videos went viral on social media.

Police said the accused, a 40 year old grocery shop owner, was arrested after a complaint and an audio clip shared online. The woman alleged that she was assaulted and later threatened using recorded videos and claimed that several other obscene clips were found on his phone.

Police seized the mobile phone and are checking the content to identify possible victims as part of the ongoing investigation. The accused has been sent to judicial custody and further inquiry is continuing to find whether more women are involved in the case.

Party leaders have said the accused is not an official member of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam and have distanced themselves from him.

India's path to Viksit Bharat 2047 runs through farms, villages: Om Birla

NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday said that India's path to becoming a developed nation by 2047 runs through its villages, farms and agricultural sector, stressing that sustainable farming, innovation and research are central to the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

He added that blending traditional agricultural wisdom with modern technology would help position India as a global leader in agriculture.

Addressing the two-day National Conference on Sustainable Agriculture for Viksit Bharat@2047: Tradition, Technology and Tangible Outcomes, organised by the Akhil Bharatiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh (ABRSM) in collaboration with the Indian

Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Birla described agriculture as far more than merely an economic activity in India.

"It is an integral part of the nation's culture, civilisation, and way of life", he remarked. He further stated that agriculture would continue to play a pivotal role in the vision of a developed India by ensuring food security, promoting rural prosperity, fostering social harmony and driving inclusive growth.

"India's villages are the country's true strength, and our farmers continue to be the backbone of both our economy and social fabric," he said.

Drawing attention to the challenges arising from climate change and shifting global circumstances, Birla stressed that agriculture must increasingly be guided by science, research and innovation. He underscored the need to combine time-tested traditional practices with cutting-edge technologies in order to build a farming ecosystem that is sustainable, profitable and resilient.

Shah directs panel on demographic change to conduct

NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday chaired a meeting of the 'high-level committee on demographic change' in the country and directed it to undertake a detailed study of population shifts in India's border districts and assess their implications, officials said.

Chairing a meeting, which was attended by all the members of the panel, , Shah asked them to conduct field visits to border regions, metropolitan centres and industrial towns to examine demographic changes attributed to illegal migration and other factors described by the government as "unnatural causes".

The committee was constituted by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs through a notification last month to assess demographic changes across the country and recommend measures to address challenges arising from illegal immigration. Headed by former SC judge Justice Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar, it includes the Census Commissioner Mritunjay Kumar Narayan, former IAS officer Durga Shankar Mishra, former IPS officer Balaji Srivastava and economist Dr Shamika Ravi. The Joint Secretary in the Foreigners Division-I of the MHA serves as its member secretary.

Supriya Sule denies talk of party merger

NAGPUR

Amid growing political speculation ahead of the Maharashtra Legislative Council elections, Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) leader Supriya Sule on Saturday firmly denied reports suggesting a possible merger with the Congress.

Sule said there had been no communication, proposal, or discussion regarding any merger between the two parties. She clarified that neither the Congress had approached the NCP (SP) nor had her party initiated any such move. According to her, no MLA, MP, or party leader had been contacted, and she was unaware of how such rumours began circulating.

She also stated that NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar had not received any proposal from the Congress and had not sent any offer either. She stressed that the reports were purely speculative and not based on any factual exchange between the parties.

When asked about wider political discussions, including speculation about possible alignments among opposition parties, Sule avoided commenting on internal meetings involving senior leaders of other parties. Referring to a recent private meeting between Congress leader Sonia Gandhi and Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee, she said she was not aware of what was discussed and had no details of their conversation.

Instead of focusing on political speculation, Sule shifted attention to national concerns. She said the country was currently facing serious economic and social challenges, including inflation, unemployment, corruption, and repeated examination irregularities. According to her, these issues were affecting ordinary citizens and required urgent attention.

231 CADETS JOIN IAF AS RAJNATH REVIEWS PARADE

DUNDIGAL

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday reviewed the Combined Graduation Parade at the Air Force Academy in Dundigal, Telangana, where 231 flight cadets were commissioned as officers in the Indian Air Force.

The newly-commissioned officers include 194 men and 37 women. Significantly, the batch also features the first group of women cadets from the National Defence Academy, marking an important milestone in the history of military training and inclusion

in the armed forces.

During the ceremony, officers from the Indian Navy, the Indian Coast Guard, and two officers from Vietnam also received their wings after completing their training. Three officers were awarded Brevets after successfully finishing navigation training.

Addressing the cadets, Rajnath Singh said they were joining a force that has played a decisive role in protecting the nation in times of war and crisis. He recalled the Air Force's contribution during the 1947–48 Kashmir conflict, the 1971 war, and recent operations, highlighting its role in safeguarding national security.

He also referred to modern challenges in warfare, noting that future conflicts would not always involve visible enemies. He said advanced technologies such as satellites, drones, radar systems, sensors, and robotics are changing the nature of combat, making preparedness and quick decision-making more important than ever.

The Minister urged the young officers to stay alert and continuously adapt to new technologies and strategies.

QUICK READ

Ukraine drone strike ignites Russian Port

Moscow

A Ukrainian drone attack killed one person and ignited a major fire at a southern Russian sea terminal in Temryuk. Kyiv's military and security services confirmed they targeted multiple Russian energy facilities overnight. The strikes heavily damaged five fuel tanks at the Krasnodar terminal and ignited a separate fire at an oil pumping facility in the Volgograd region. With peace talks to resolve the four-year war currently stalled, Ukraine continues to aggressively hit Russia's oil infrastructure. This latest bombardment has forced key Russian refineries to suspend processing and disrupted vital export pipelines.

Spiritual leader drives peace in beautiful Baku

Baku

Renowned humanitarian Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar visited Azerbaijan to promote mental wellness and harmony at a major public event. During his inspiring address, Gurudev opened a new Art of Living and Wellbeing Centre in Baku, offering yoga, meditation, and Ayurveda. He encouraged daily meditation to spread global happiness. Indian Ambassador Abhay Kumar welcomed him, highlighting ancient historical ties between India and Azerbaijan, once known as "Western Kashi." The Ambassador also gifted Gurudev his book on Nalanda University. Attendees left the gathering deeply energized, carrying a shared vision for a stress-free and peaceful society.

Global leaders unite to fight hate speech

NEW YORK

UN officials and the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace met to strengthen teamwork in stopping hate speech and mass violence across Africa. Al-Mahfoudh bin Bayyah and UN adviser Chaloka Beyani discussed using preventive dialogues to cool down social tensions before they turn into deadly conflicts. They reviewed a new report from London focused on building lasting peace. Both teams agreed to start working together on early warning systems and training local religious leaders. Experts stress that countering toxic words is vital, as wars always start with hateful rhetoric that tears societies apart.

PM TAKAICHI ANNOUNCES DEBUT AT G7 SUMMIT

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi begins her first G7 journey, focusing on energy security and supply chain resilience

TOKYO

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi announced that her upcoming diplomatic tour to the United Kingdom, Italy, and France, marking her highly anticipated debut at the G7 Summit.

The tour aims to secure stronger international alliances regarding energy security, supply chain resilience, and critical minerals.

Before arriving in France for the Evian Summit, Takaichi will hold bilateral talks with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Italian

Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. The leaders are scheduled to address pressing geopolitical crises across East Asia, the Middle East, and Ukraine.

Additionally, discussions will focus heavily on bolstering mutual ties in advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, semiconductors, space exploration, and quantum tech.

As a new face at the G7 table, Takaichi expressed her desire to lead the international community through unity. She plans to present three distinct energy security proposals to combat unfair export restrictions, coordinate emergency oil stockpiling across Asia, and balance consumer-producer relations against economic coercion. Under this strategic vision, Japan aims to promote its unique leadership model, affectionately termed "Power Asia."

Furthermore, the Japanese leader will pitch a pioneering joint framework for G7 nations to systematically stockpile critical minerals and ensure mutual supply line linkages.

Emphasizing a strong Indo-Pacific perspective, Takaichi stressed that she is eagerly looking forward to participating in intensive, transparent, and rules-based global trade discussions with fellow world leaders to solve recurring international emergencies.

A new report warns Chinese infrastructure investments are increasing dependency risks and weakening oversight across Latin American nations

Chinese infra in Latin America sparks worries

NEW DELHI

A new report warns that Chinese infrastructure projects across Latin America are severely challenging local oversight mechanisms and creating a dangerous wave of strategic dependency. Experts are now urging Latin American nations to aggressively strengthen their ability to negotiate and monitor these foreign investments.

According to a report, the rapid execution of China-linked projects often bypasses necessary technical reviews, public scrutiny, and legislative oversight. While these accelerated timelines offer quick political and economic wins for local governments, critics argue they present immense long-term risks regarding transparency, debt management, and institutional autonomy.

Pamela Arostica, director of the China and Latin America Network (REDCAEM), noted that project timelines frequently outpace domestic evaluation cycles. This forces host countries to hastily adjust to the aggressive speed of external financing. Furthermore, these loans operate with minimal transparency and very few environmental or governance safeguards.

Many of these initiatives utilize "turnkey" schemes, meaning both the workforce and construction supplies are sourced directly from China.

This practice severely limits local employment and reduces domestic participation in vital strategic sectors. Additionally, China's rigid approach to debt restructuring is amplifying economic pressures on already heavily indebted nations.

Currently, Chinese firms dominate critical resource extraction, including copper in Peru and lithium in Argentina and Chile. Analysts conclude that this expanding economic model is deeply eroding state management and stripping Latin American countries of their independent decision-making power.

Systemic corruption blocks Bangladesh's fin growth: Reports

NEW DELHI

A startling new report reveals that Bangladesh's biggest challenge may not be its financial shortfall, but a severe crisis in ethics and good governance. Experts warn that the country will struggle unless systemic corruption and elite-driven extraction are aggressively reduced. According to a reports, the money lost to overpricing, institutional inefficiency, and corruption likely exceeds the nation's actual budget deficit. While the government proposed a massive budget of Tk 9.3 lakh crore with a projected fiscal deficit of Tk 2.43 lakh crore, analysts argue that traditional debates over these numbers miss the real issue.

The report highlights three major deficits - the budget deficit, the revenue deficit, and the critical "Ethics and Good Governance" deficit. It is this third deficit that creates a "fiscal mirage," where public funds are systematically drained by an elite-captured system. In fact, studies suggest that up to 40 percent of public expenditure is completely lost to systemic leakages.

Interestingly, substantial wealth exists within Bangladesh, evidenced by a visible boom in luxury consumption and high-end real estate. However, severe misgovernance has allowed a large portion of this taxable wealth to remain entirely outside the reach of the official tax system, starving the public treasury.

Ultimately, public discussions tend to focus heavily on revenue targets and national borrowing. However, experts emphasize that until the country addresses the root problem of institutional corruption, fixing the national economy will remain an impossible task.

CCP weaves political loyalty into cultural fabric

NAYPYIDAW

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is actively politicizing traditional festivals like Qingming to strengthen its own legitimacy and authority, according to a report. This strategy cleverly weaves political loyalty into China's cultural and emotional fabric, making party allegiance feel as natural as changing seasons. Historically, the Qingming festival was a quiet, family-centered spring ritual dedicated to ancestral tomb-sweeping and remembering relatives. However, the party-state apparatus has transformed it into a highly public platform focused on revolutionary sacrifice, patriotism, and regime praise.

This state-sponsored narrative extends far beyond Qingming to include other major holidays. For instance, the Dragon Boat Festival is now officially framed around patriotic commitment to fuel modern anti-corruption campaigns. Similarly, the Mid-Autumn Festival has been reinterpreted to connect the deep emotional desire for family reunions with a strong identification toward the state.

An increasing body of official literature explicitly views traditional holidays as perfect tools for socialist education, particularly for shaping the minds of the youth. By using festivals as a governance technology, the CCP systematically re-arms its citizens emotionally and symbolically throughout the year. While many ordinary families still view Qingming simply as a personal day to clean graves and offer flowers to late grandparents, they must now do so under a heavy layer of state expectations.

Albanian land dispute threatens Kushner Project

A luxury Albanian resort linked to Jared Kushner faces growing opposition as villagers challenge land ownership and environmental concerns

ZVERNEC

A multi-billion-euro luxury resort project involving Jared Kushner, son-in-law of US President Donald Trump, has sparked fierce backlash as Albanian villagers claim the development sits on wrongfully sold land.

Local residents in the southern village of Zvernec allege that a rival claimant sold their ancestral beachfront properties without their consent or any financial compensation. Backed by property deeds and tax records, the furious locals have hired a lawyer to file a court order to halt the construction entirely.

While there is no evidence of direct wrongdoing by Kushner, the ownership battle has added immense fuel to an already controversial project. The planned eco-resort sits inside the pristine Vjosa-Narta Protected Area, a vital wetland habitat for migrating flamingos, seals, and sea turtles. The project has triggered mass protests in the capital city of Tirana, drawing serious concerns from the European Union regarding the preservation of local wildlife.

The land dispute stems from complex, unresolved communist-era property laws. A rival claimant, Artur Shehu, asserts his family's ownership dates back to the Ottoman Empire and claims his sale of the land was legal. However, a local court had previously ruled in favor of the villagers in 2013, and the appeal remains unresolved.

Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama strongly defended the development, stating that ongoing lawsuits do not automatically freeze property use. Meanwhile, developers Sazan Real Estate stated their goal is to celebrate Albania's natural beauty and create local jobs, though heartbroken residents argue that blocking beach access mirrors the restrictions of the old communist regime.

Pakistan's shrinking civic space triggers global anxiety

COLOMBO

Pakistan's shrinking civic space is triggering intense global anxiety over a steady erosion of democratic freedoms. Government authorities are increasingly utilizing strict cybercrime regulations, counterterrorism laws, and severe digital restrictions to silence dissent and avoid political accountability, according to a report.

This systemic pressure has drastically weakened media independence, choked public assembly, and placed civil society groups under heavy surveillance. Across the nation, public criticism is no longer just discouraged, it is actively criminalized. Journalists now weigh every sentence against the threat of immediate legal retaliation, while ordinary social media users face arrest for challenging official narratives.

International human rights watchdogs warn that Pakistan is currently enduring its most severe democratic regression in recent history. This decline is defined by rapidly expanding state powers, weakening judicial independence, and a dangerous atmosphere where criticizing state institutions carries immense professional and personal risk.

Independent journalism faces the heaviest blow. The Pakistan Press Foundation has documented hundreds of instances of threats, harassment, and travel restrictions targeting prominent media figures. Reporters covering highly sensitive topics, such as civil-military relations or election controversies, face the greatest danger.

Furthermore, digital censorship has intensified dramatically. Authorities frequently enforce internet shutdowns and bandwidth disruptions during political protests and elections. Experts emphasize that this ongoing crisis severely damages society's ability to question power, leaving citizens unable to debate vital issues or access free information without fear of reprisal.

NAME CHANGE

I, **AYESHA BEE**, W/o, Abdul Lateef, Resident of No 180, 4th Croos 4th Main Shamanna Garden Bengaluru Dist,560026, have changed my name to **AYESHA BI**, vide affidavit dated: 13.06.2026 before notary H S SAKALESH ARADHYA , Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SHAHEEN TAJ ABDUL AZEEZ** , W/o, Jamsheed Pasha, Resident of Kumbar Beedi Jamiya Masjid Nagamangala Town Mandya Dist,571432, have changed my name to **SHAHEEN TAJ**, vide affidavit dated: 13.06.2026 before notary H S SAKALESH ARADHYA , Bengaluru.

Document Lost

This is to inform to General public that my client Sri.S Bhaskar S/o Seenappa, Residing at Budederu Vilage, Byrakuru Gramapanchayth, Byrakuru Hobali,Mulabagilu Taluk, Kolar District, I am the Owner of the Below said Property,while Sale Deed for taken Digital copy ,have lost following Documents of property pertating to below Mentioned property Situated at Budederu Vilage, Byrakuru Gramapanchayth, Byrakuru Hobali,Mulabagilu Taluk, Kolar District, had published the factum of lost of his Original Sale deed, Dated;- 19-03-2012, Regd Sale Deed, Executed By Smt.Narayanamma W/o Venkatappa,In Favour of Smt. Radha W/o Venkataramanareddy,In regd as Book No.1,Volume No.MBL-1-04127-2011-12,CD No.MBLD78,In regd before of the SRO Mulabagilu ,in Respect of Property Bearing Budaderu Village, Syno.52/6, in Measuring 0.27.04.00 Guntas, in Which 0.02 Guntas ,police complaint have been filed with regards to loss of the above said Document vide complaint in NCR NO. Lost Report no.2253134/2026, DATED;-13-06-2026, and complaint dated;-13-06-2026, by respective person,if anybody finds these Document please inform within 7 Days in Below mentioned Address.
Place;-Chinthamani,
Date;-13-06-2026 K.S.HARISH KUMAR ADVOCATE
Office: NEAR KISHORE SCHOOL, ABOVE APPOLO PHARMACY, BESIDE SANTHOSHI MATHA TEMPLE, BANGALORE MAIN ROAD CHINTHAMANI.M;-9980110692

NAME CHANGE

I, **IMRAN AHMED SHARIFF** , S/o, Javeed Ahmed, Resident of No 387,2nd Cross 6th Main Near Shams Function Hall Sathagalli Layout Mysuru Dist 570019, have changed my name to **IMRAN AHAMED SHARIFF** , vide affidavit dated: 13.06.2026 before notary H S SAKALESH ARADHYA, Bengaluru.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Mrs. Lavanya R.S. intends to sell a vacant site bearing PID No. 24-2-149-20, Assessment No. 162/153, situated at Ward No. 24, Karkhanepete, Chickballapur City, measuring 88.908171 Sq. Mtrs., bounded by: East–Road, West–Syed Khasim's House, North–Gollagiddanna Appayya's House, South–D.R. Sudha's Property.
Mr. Bharath Kumar S/o Shankar Lal proposes to purchase the said property. Any person having any right, title, interest, claim, charge, lien, mortgage, encumbrance or objection over the said property shall notify the undersigned with supporting original documents within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the transaction will be completed and no subsequent claims shall be entertained.
C.N SANTHOSH, ADVOCATE
Address: #12, Khasimsab Road Behind Benaka xerox, karkhanepete Ward No. 25, chikkaballapur city
Phone no:9663030750
Buyers: **Bharat Kumar** S/o Shankar Lal, Ward No. 24, Karkhanepete, Chickballapur Nagar,
Phone no:9880156750

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FAÇADE WITHOUT TRUMP

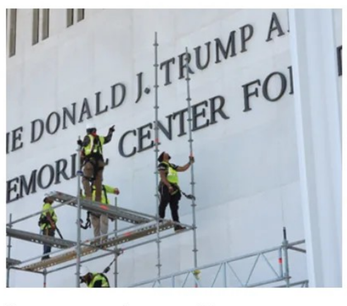
Judge orders Trump's name off Kennedy Center

WASHINGTON

Construction crews began removing US President Donald Trump's name from the exterior of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The move followed a federal judge's ruling that rebranding the landmark venue was completely unlawful.

Following a night of severe Washington thunderstorms and intense legal battles, workers started dismantling the large letters from the center's white marble façade midnight. The institution had previously requested a 12-hour extension to comply with a court-ordered midnight deadline, citing safety risks and weather-related delays that slowed down the process.

A federal appeals court rejected an emergency request from the center to pause the removal while legal proceedings continue. Government lawyers unsuccessfully argued against the order, claiming that changing the signage could confuse the public if the administration eventually wins its appeal.



They also raised major financial concerns, stating that under current bylaws, hundreds of millions of dollars in donor commitments might have to be returned if Trump's name is taken down.

Despite these ongoing legal challenges, the center must strip the President's name from its building, website, and promotional materials. The controversial renaming occurred in December after Trump packed the board of trustees with political allies. However, the courts firmly ruled that only Congress has the legal authority to change the name of the historic cultural landmark. Critics are hailing the predawn removal as a massive symbolic victory for the preservation of the iconic arts institution.

QUICK READ

Zuckerberg assures stability after Meta AI workforce

New Delhi

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg has told employees that no further company-wide layoffs are expected in 2026 following recent restructuring linked to the company's artificial intelligence push. Meta cut about 10 percent of its workforce in May and reassigned nearly 7,000 employees to AI-focused roles. Zuckerberg acknowledged mistakes during the transition but said the company is working to provide greater stability and new opportunities for affected staff. Meta also plans to boost spending on team-building activities, including larger offsite events and a major hackathon in July. The company will review management structures and reduce oversight burdens.

Non-fossil energy share must exceed 80%: NITI Aayog

NEW DELHI

India must raise the share of non-fossil energy sources to over 80 per cent of its energy mix to achieve its net-zero target, a senior NITI Aayog official said. Speaking at the India Bio Energy Conference 2026, Rajnath Ram, Advisor (Energy), noted that fossil fuels currently account for more than 80 per cent of primary energy consumption, while non-fossil sources contribute only 15-18 per cent. He stressed the need to reverse this trend through diversification and greater use of domestic resources. Ram also highlighted coal gasification and bio-energy as key tools for strengthening energy security and reducing imports.

Farm credit demand likely strong in FY27: NABARD

New Delhi

Farm credit demand in India is expected to remain strong in FY27, driven by rising input costs and increased agricultural investments, a NABARD official said. NABARD Deputy Managing Director Ajay Kumar Sood noted that agricultural and rural credit demand has grown steadily over the past decade and is likely to continue increasing, though at a gradual pace. He attributed the trend to wider Kisan Credit Card coverage, mechanisation, and investments in allied activities and infrastructure. The official also highlighted that structural changes in rural lending and diversification of farm activities are supporting sustained credit growth across the agriculture sector.

OpenAI flags China-linked influence campaigns targeting AI

OpenAI has uncovered two China-linked influence campaigns that allegedly used AI-generated content to shape debates on technology policies.

NEW DELHI

Artificial intelligence company OpenAI has identified two groups of ChatGPT accounts, believed to be linked to China, that allegedly used AI-generated content to influence public discussions surrounding American artificial intelligence policies and broader technology-related issues.

According to OpenAI, the accounts were involved in covert influence operations designed to shape narratives on social media and manipulate ongoing debates concerning AI infrastructure, technology competition, and government policies in the United States.

The first operation, dubbed the "Data Center Bandwagon" campaign, generated social media posts and images claiming that the rapid expansion of AI data centres was driving up electricity costs for ordinary households.

OpenAI said the campaign appeared aimed at amplifying concerns about the economic impact of large-scale AI infrastructure projects.

The second operation, named the "Tech and Tariffs" campaign, focused on criticism of US tariff policies.

The content portrayed tariffs as attempts by the United States to dominate global technological competition. OpenAI noted that prompts used by the operators specifically instructed the AI system

to avoid references to Chinese President Xi Jinping while highlighting US President Donald Trump.

The company also stated that the second campaign was linked to a network of likely inauthentic social media accounts that attempted to spread false claims alleging that ChatGPT user data had been compromised. OpenAI categorically rejected those allegations, describing them as entirely unfounded.

OpenAI said the significance of the campaigns lies not in their apparent impact on public opinion but in their focus on AI infrastructure, which the company described as a key pillar of American technological leadership, economic growth, and democratic innovation.

Investigators found no evidence that either operation achieved meaningful influence beyond its own network of activity.

However, the company warned that such efforts demonstrate how foreign actors may attempt to covertly participate in sensitive public policy debates while concealing their identities and motivations.

OpenAI said it will continue working with governments, industry groups, and civil society organisations to detect and counter AI-enabled influence operations that threaten democratic institutions and public trust.

Inflation pressures may force rate hikes ahead

NEW DELHI

Inflation in India is expected to remain close to 5 per cent in FY27, with economists warning that persistent risks from food and fuel prices could compel the Reserve Bank of India to consider interest rate hikes of 50–75 basis points over the course of the fiscal year, acs per a recent report.

The outlook reflects growing concerns over supply-side pressures in the economy, particularly in essential commodities. Volatility in global crude oil markets, coupled with domestic food price fluctuations, is expected to keep inflationary pressures elevated despite efforts to maintain price stability.

It noted that food inflation remains a key risk factor due to unpredictable weather patterns, uneven monsoon distribution, and supply chain constraints affecting agricultural output. At the same time, fuel prices continue to be sensitive to geopolitical developments and global energy demand dynamics.

SpaceX IPO a true test for capitalism: Uday Kotak

NEW DELHI

Veteran banker Uday Kotak has described the blockbuster initial public offering (IPO) of SpaceX as a "true test for capitalism" after the company's shares surged on their stock market debut, pushing its valuation above $2 trillion.

Kotak said the valuation of SpaceX does not fit traditional financial models and represents a massive bet on the future of humanity and technological progress. He questioned whether investors are backing a transformative vision for the future or participating in what could eventually prove to be a market bubble.

SpaceX made history with the largest IPO ever, raising approximately $75 billion. The stock debuted strongly on the Nasdaq, closing nearly 19 per cent above its IPO price and giving the company a market capitalisation of more than $2.1 trillion.

The listing also made Elon Musk the world's first trillionaire. In a post on social media, Kotak remarked that the IPO, listing, and developments beyond represent a significant test of how modern capitalism values future potential over conventional financial metrics.

The successful debut reflects strong investor enthusiasm for companies operating at the intersection of space exploration, artificial intelligence, and advanced technology. Analysts, however, remain divided over whether the valuation can be justified by current revenues and profitability, with some warning of excessive optimism in technology-driven markets.

Despite concerns over valuation, the IPO is being viewed as a landmark moment for global capital markets and could influence upcoming public offerings from other major AI and technology firms.

The proposed changes are expected to reduce compliance burden and speed up international transactions for businesses engaged in global trade

RBI plans imple cross-border payment nod to support exporters

NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is reportedly working on simplifying cross-border payment approval processes in a move aimed at boosting India's micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and export competitiveness, according to an EY report.

The proposed changes are expected to reduce compliance burden and speed up international transactions for businesses engaged in global trade. MSMEs, which often face delays and high transaction costs in foreign payments, are likely to benefit the most from the streamlined framework.

According to the report, the RBI's initiative is part of a broader effort to improve ease of doing business in India's external trade ecosystem. Faster and more transparent cross-border payment systems are expected to enhance liquidity for exporters and reduce operational friction in global supply chains.

The reforms are also seen as critical in helping Indian firms integrate more efficiently with global markets at a time when international trade is becoming increasingly complex due to geopolitical tensions and shifting regulatory frameworks.

Industry experts believe that simplifying approval mechanisms could improve export competitiveness, particularly for smaller firms that lack the resources to navigate complex compliance procedures. It may also encourage more participation in global e-commerce and services exports.

The report noted that India's export sector has been steadily growing but still faces structural challenges, including payment delays, documentation requirements, and currency conversion inefficiencies.

The RBI's proposed measures aim to address these long-standing issues.

Additionally, improved cross-border payment systems could strengthen India's position as a global trade hub by making financial transactions more efficient and predictable for foreign partners.

While details of the new framework are yet to be officially released, the direction signals a policy focus on digitisation, financial integration, and export-led growth. Analysts expect further announcements in the coming months as the central bank continues consultations with stakeholders.

The move is being closely watched by exporters, fintech companies, and banking institutions, all of whom stand to benefit from a more streamlined and modernised cross-border payment infrastructure.

FPI selling in India may ease on positives

NEW DELHI

Foreign portfolio investor (FPI) selling in Indian equities is expected to slow significantly in the coming months, supported by improving economic prospects, currency stability, and favourable geopolitical developments, market analysts said on Saturday.

According to experts, there has already been a noticeable decline in FPI selling activity. FPIs sold equities worth only Rs 1,082 crore in the cash market, indicating a moderation in outflows compared to previous sessions.

Market participants believe recent geopolitical developments, particularly expectations of a potential peace agreement between the United States and Iran, have improved investor sentiment. The possibility of easing tensions has contributed to a sharp decline in global crude oil prices, with Brent crude falling below $87 per barrel.

For India, one of the world's largest oil-importing nations, lower crude prices are considered highly beneficial.

India's monthly SIP contributions surge tenfold in decade

NEW DELHI

India's systematic investment plan (SIP) ecosystem has witnessed remarkable growth over the past decade, with monthly SIP contributions increasing nearly tenfold, highlighting the rising participation of retail investors in mutual funds despite economic and market uncertainties.

According to a report by ValueMetrics, the monthly SIP book expanded from Rs 3,189 crore in May 2016 to Rs 30,954 crore in May 2026. The growth was achieved despite several major disruptions over the years, including demonetisation, the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and global trade and tariff-related challenges.

The report noted that outstanding SIP accounts reached 1,047 lakh in May 2026, reflecting sustained investor confidence in long-term wealth creation through disciplined investing. This represented a year-on-year increase of more than 15 per cent from 906 lakh accounts recorded in May 2025.During the month, new SIP registrations stood at 54.2 lakh, while discontinuations and tenure completions were reported at 51.7 lakh. As a result, net new SIP additions recovered to 2.5 lakh in May. However, rising account closures indicate increasing churn within the SIP investor base.

The mutual fund industry's total assets under management (AUM) stood at Rs 81.6 lakh crore by the end of May. Active equity mutual funds attracted gross inflows of Rs 57,604 crore during the month. Combined net inflows into active pure equity and hybrid funds reached Rs 33,468 crore, while hybrid funds excluding arbitrage schemes recorded net inflows of Rs 4,862 crore.

Meanwhile, gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs) witnessed net outflows of Rs 725 crore, reversing the strong inflow trend observed earlier this year. Active equity funds registered net inflows of Rs 22,908 crore.The report said SIP assets touched Rs 17.12 lakh crore, underlining the growing importance of SIPs as a preferred investment route for millions of Indian households amid ongoing market volatility.

Anthropic suspends advanced AI models following US directive

NEW DELHI

AI company Anthropic has announced the suspension of access to its advanced Fable 5 and Mythos 5 artificial intelligence models for all foreign nationals after receiving an export control directive from the United States government.

According to the company, the order requires immediate restrictions on the use of the models by non-US citizens, including Anthropic employees, regardless of whether they are located inside or outside the United States. To comply with the directive, Anthropic said it is disabling access to the affected models for customers worldwide.

World Bank lowers global growth outlook amid Mideast conflict

NEW DELHI

The World Bank has cut its global growth forecast to 2.5 per cent, warning that escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and the resulting energy shock are set to weigh heavily on global economic activity.

The revised projection reflects growing uncertainty in international markets as conflict in the Middle East disrupts energy supplies and drives volatility in crude oil prices. The World Bank cautioned that sustained instability in energy markets could trigger renewed inflationary pressures across both advanced and developing economies.

Rising oil prices are expected to increase transportation and manufacturing costs globally, ultimately feeding into higher consumer prices and dampening household spending. The impact is likely to be more severe in import-dependent economies, particularly emerging markets with limited fiscal space to absorb external shocks.

The report highlighted that the global economy is already facing multiple headwinds, including high interest rates, sluggish trade growth, and elevated debt levels. The addition of an energy shock further complicates the recovery trajectory, making it harder for countries to achieve stable and inclusive growth.

Developing economies are expected to bear a disproportionate burden, as weaker currencies and higher import bills exacerbate inflation and strain public finances. At the same time, investment flows are likely to remain cautious as geopolitical risks discourage long-term capital commitments.

Central banks around the world are expected to maintain a careful balance between controlling inflation and supporting growth. However, persistent energy-driven price pressures could limit the scope for monetary easing in the near term. The World Bank also warned that prolonged conflict in the Middle East could disrupt global supply chains and further fragment international trade, adding to existing structural challenges in the global economy.

Despite the downward revision, the institution noted that coordinated global policy responses and efforts to stabilise energy markets could help reduce downside risks. Strengthening energy security and diversifying supply sources were identified as key priorities for governments.

Overall, the outlook underscores a fragile global recovery environment, where geopolitical developments remain a critical determinant of economic stability and growth prospects.

RISING BORROWING COSTS

'2020s may be a 'lost decade' for developing nations'

NEW DELHI

The World Bank has warned that the 2020s could turn into a "lost decade" for many developing economies unless urgent structural reforms and stronger global cooperation are implemented to revive growth, investment, and productivity.

The warning comes amid slowing global economic expansion, elevated debt levels, and persistent inequality that continue to weigh heavily on low- and middle-income countries. According to the assessment, many developing nations are struggling to regain pre-pandemic growth momentum, with recovery uneven across regions.

The World Bank highlighted that weaker investment flows, rising borrowing costs, and limited fiscal space are constraining governments' ability to support long-term development goals. It added that external shocks such as geopolitical tensions, trade disruptions, and climate-related disasters are further intensifying vulnerabilities.

Officials noted that productivity growth, which is a key driver of long-term economic progress, has slowed significantly in many emerging markets. This trend raises concerns that income convergence with advanced economies could stall, leaving millions at risk of prolonged economic stagnation.

The report also stressed that high debt burdens in several developing countries are limiting public spending on infrastructure, healthcare, and education. In some cases, governments are spending more on debt servicing than on essential development programs, reducing their capacity to stimulate growth.

The World Bank called for coordinated international action, including reforms to global financial systems, improved debt restructuring mechanisms, and increased investment in climate resilience. It also emphasized the need for domestic reforms focused on improving governance, boosting private sector participation, and enhancing human capital.

Despite the bleak outlook, the institution noted that targeted reforms and policy discipline could still reverse the trajectory for many economies.

PV Sindhu exits Australian Open in Semifinals

SYDNEY

Indian badminton star PV Sindhu's quest for her first title-round appearance of the 2026 season ended in disappointment. The former world champion suffered a straight-games defeat to reigning world champion Akane Yamaguchi in the women's singles semifinals at the Australian Badminton Open.

The world No. 10 pushed her Japanese opponent incredibly hard during a fiercely contested opening game. However, the third-seeded Yamaguchi quickly seized complete control of the match, wrapping up a 22-20, 21-12 victory in just 43 minutes to secure her well-deserved spot in the BWF Super 500 final.

PV Sindhu's Australian Open campaign ended in heartbreak as Akane Yamaguchi outclassed the Indian star in the semifinals

The opening game delivered high-stakes drama, with Sindhu holding a slender lead at the mid-game interval. Yamaguchi responded aggressively by rattling off six consecutive points. Though Sindhu fought back bravely to save a game point at 20-19, the Japanese shuttler held her nerve to take the opener.

In the second game, Yamaguchi completely dominated, reeling off seven unanswered points to crush any hopes of an Indian comeback. This victory marks Yamaguchi's 14th win over Sindhu in their 29 career meetings.

Sindhu's exit officially brings India's campaign in Sydney to a close. Earlier, the men's doubles pair of M.R. Arjun and Hariharan Amsakarunan retired during their quarterfinal match, while the men's singles contingent crashed out in the opening round. The Indian badminton squad will now look to rebuild and shift their focus to the Macau Open Super 300 tournament, which begins next week.

Harmanpreet's vast experience cannot be bought: Muzumdar

BIRMINGHAM

India head coach Amol Muzumdar stated that the national team is highly fortunate to have the services of veteran captain Harmanpreet Kaur. As India gears up to begin their 2026 ICC Women's T20 World Cup campaign against arch-rivals Pakistan at Edgbaston, Muzumdar stressed that Kaur's vast experience remains completely invaluable.

Set to participate in her tenth T20 World Cup, Harmanpreet is one of only seven cricketers globally to play in every edition since her 2009 international debut. The coach noted that her seventeen years of experience cannot be bought. Although India captured the 50-over ODI World Cup title last year, Muzumdar acknowledged that this T20 tournament presents a brand-new format with completely fresh challenges.

The squad has adapted well to the changing English weather after completing a rigorous three-week training camp. Muzumdar revealed that plans for this tournament were set in motion six months ago. He highlighted the inspiring return of Yastika Bhatia, who successfully fought her way back into the team following major knee surgery.

While the coach admitted that running between the wickets remains a continuous work in progress, he praised the immense depth of his bowling lineup, which features eight quality options. Muzumdar also backed hard-hitting wicketkeeper Richa Ghosh to excel as a finisher now that she has regained her form. Entering the tournament as reigning ODI world champions, India remains fully focused on securing another historic piece of cricket silverware.

Sahith Theegala eyes leaderboard in thrilling weekend

ONTARIO

Sahith Theegala stayed in Canadian Open contention at 7-under despite slipping from the lead, trailing by three shots entering the weekend rounds

Indian-American golfer Sahith Theegala remains firmly in contention at the Canadian Open despite losing his opening-round lead. The talented athlete carded a 1-under 69 in the second round, reaching 7-under overall. He currently sits tied for 13th place, just three shots behind the tournament leader as the event heads into an exciting weekend.

After a brilliant first-round 64, Theegala faced tougher playing conditions. He started strong with early birdies on the third and seventh holes. However, bogeys on the 10th and 15th holes slowed his momentum. Showing great resilience, he hit a crucial birdie on the final hole to keep himself well within striking distance of the top spot.

Meanwhile, Canadian golfer Sudarshan Yellamaraju, who also has Indian roots, had an impressive day. He shot a 4-under 66 to climb to 5-under overall, safely securing his place for the weekend in 28th place.

Unfortunately, the news was not as good for Aaron Rai. The English golfer of Indian heritage narrowly missed the weekend cut by a single shot after hitting a 70, finishing at 1-under. Indo-Canadian qualifier Jeevan Sihota also missed the cut, finishing at 3-over par.

At the top of the leaderboard, American rookie Ben James snatched the lead with a flawless 7-under 63, moving to 10-under overall. Five players sit just one shot behind him. With Theegala only three strokes behind, the final rounds offer him a wonderful chance to fight for the title.

Prasidh Krishna eyes 2027 World Cup preparation

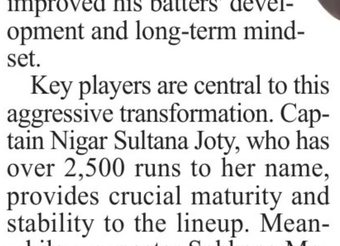
DHARAMSHALA

Indian fast bowler Prasidh Krishna stated that the ongoing three-match ODI series against Afghanistan is crucial for building team rhythm ahead of the 2027 Men's ODI World Cup. Speaking at the HPCA Stadium, where heavy rain delayed the opening match's toss, Krishna emphasized the long-term importance of these fixtures.

The right-arm pacer explained that these international matches allow the squad to test out the right combinations and pinpoint areas that require improvement. Reflecting on his recent stellar Test appearance in New Chandigarh, where he claimed impressive figures of 3-37, Krishna revealed that his recent training has focused extensively on hitting a fuller, more uncomfortable length for batsmen.

Transitioning back to white-ball cricket after a busy multi-format schedule, Krishna noted that success relies heavily on mental adaptation. He explained that his primary goal in the shorter format is to bowl tight lines, restrict easy runs, and apply maximum pressure on the opposition.

With key veterans Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, and Hardik Pandya missing from the current squad, Krishna downplayed any talk of seniority or hierarchy in the bowling department. He insisted that the players have



shared the dressing room for a long time, enabling them to learn from and support one another as equals.

The Indian squad, captained by Shubman Gill, will look to use this home series to test their bench strength and fine-tune their strategic plans as the countdown to the mega tournament in Africa officially begins.

Tejas Shirse breaks Men's National Hurdles record

LUDHIANA

Indian hurdler Tejas Shirse delivered a landmark performance at the Indian Athletics Series 9. The twenty-four-year-old athlete clocked a stunning 13.27 seconds in the men's 110m hurdles to set a brand-new national record and comfortably secure his qualification mark for the upcoming 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Shirse eclipsed his own previous national record of 13.41 seconds, which he set back in 2024. His brilliant effort easily surpassed the Athletics Federation of India's strict Commonwealth Games entry standard of 13.39 seconds. Running in the B final, Shirse exploded out of the starting blocks and established an early lead. Despite accidentally clipping the final hurdle, he maintained his powerful momentum to cross the finish line safely ahead of the chasing pack.

This timing represents a massive leap from his gold medal performance of 13.50 seconds at last month's Federation Cup in Ranchi. His new personal best now ranks him sixth on the highly competitive Asian continental list for the 2026 season. If officially selected by the federation, Shirse will become the first Indian male hurdler to compete at the Commonwealth Games since 2014.

Meanwhile, national record holder Mohammad Afsal P endured a disappointing day in the men's 800m event. He clocked 1:47.00, falling short of the required qualification standard. In the javelin throw event, competitors like Rohit Yadav and Kishore Kumar Jena remained in tight contention for the national squad while stars Neeraj Chopra and Sachin Yadav sit out due to injuries.

Haryana Corporate Premier League officially launched

GURUGRAM

A thrilling new era for sports has arrived with the official launch of the Haryana Corporate Premier League (HCPL). This exciting initiative aims to completely transform the game by offering a massive stage for local talent, regardless of their background or gender.

The HCPL is designed to bridge the gap between casual backyard cricket and the professional arena. It brings together corporate employees, academy students, and local neighborhood stars from all across the state. In a beautiful display of unity, the league creates a unique space where a software engineer, an entrepreneur, and a farmer can share the same dressing room and compete as equals.

In a major step toward true equality, organizers also announced the HCPL Women's Cricket League. This dedicated tournament ensures that aspiring female athletes get the same professional opportunities to showcase their skills and shine.

"Haryana has always been a powerhouse of sporting talent," said former Indian cricketer Praveen Kumar, who attended the grand launch. He noted that the league provides the perfect competitive environment for players to unlock their true potential. Former kabaddi star Pardeep Narwal also praised the initiative, calling it a total game-changer for emerging athletes.

Ajeetesh Sandhu leads Indian Contingent in Morocco

MOROCCO

Indian golfer Ajeetesh Sandhu fired a flawless, bogey-free 3-under 70 to emerge as the top-performing Indian at the halfway stage of the US$2 million International Series Morocco.

Playing on the demanding Red Course at Royal Golf Dar Es Salam, Sandhu added to his opening-round 72 to post a 4-under total, placing him in a tie for 25th. His steady second round included birdies on the fifth, 11th, and 12th holes.

Only two other Indian golfers managed to make the weekend cut. Gaganjeet Bhullar, a four-time winner on the domestic circuit, endured a rollercoaster round of 74 to slip into a tie for 47th at even par. Despite a tough start that included a double-bogey on the par-3 second hole, Bhullar fought back with a spectacular run of four straight birdies before a final-hole bogey dropped him back. He is joined at even par by Karandeep Kochhar, who carded steady back-to-back rounds of 72.

Batting coach outlines Bangladesh's T20 strategy

BIRMINGHAM

Ahead of their highly anticipated tournament opener against the Netherlands at Edgbaston, Bangladesh women's batting coach Nasir Uddin Faruqe outlined his team's evolving strategy. Entering the 2026 ICC Women's T20 World Cup, Faruqe emphasized that raising the collective batting strike rate remains the squad's primary focal point.

The team faces a daunting task in England, sharing a tough group with powerhouse nations Australia, India, and South Africa. To tackle this massive challenge, the team spent weeks training on concrete pitches and playing a tri-series in Scotland to adapt to cold European conditions. Faruqe noted that transitioning from tricky spinning tracks back home to sporting wickets has greatly improved his batters' development and long-term mindset.

Key players are central to this aggressive transformation. Captain Nigar Sultana Joty, who has over 2,500 runs to her name, provides crucial maturity and stability to the lineup. Meanwhile, youngster Sobhana Mostary, who boasts a team-high strike rate of 123, is tasked with maintaining momentum through the critical middle overs.

Alonso braces for emotional Barcelona GP farewell

BARCELONA

Two-time Formula One world champion Fernando Alonso has admitted that Barcelona-Catalunya Grand Prix will likely be his final race at the historic circuit. However, the Spanish racing icon somberly warned his massive home crowd that his car's lack of pace will offer very little to celebrate. The 44-year-old veteran is out of contract with Aston Martin at the conclusion of this season, and his racing future remains heavily uncertain. Furthermore, a calendar shake-up means Madrid will host the Spanish Grand Prix this September, and Barcelona will rotate off the F1 calendar entirely until 2028 making a future appearance for Alonso highly improbable.

"It's going to be a special weekend, probably my last Barcelona race in Formula One," Alonso mentioned. "I will not be competitive and I will not be too long in the car in qualifying... but I want everyone to still enjoy the weekend. It has always been a celebration when the fans come to Barcelona. This is my 23rd Spanish Grand Prix, and all of them have been magical."

Alonso, whose last Grand Prix victory famously occurred at this exact track back in 2013, stated he will fully evaluate whether to continue his F1 career after the upcoming European summer break.

The warning of a difficult weekend mirrors the reality of Aston Martin's painful struggles this season. The Honda-powered team only managed to secure their first point of the entire year last weekend in Monaco, scraping into 10th place due to a post-race penalty ahead of them.

Aston Martin's chief trackside officer, Mike Krack, echoed his star driver's grim outlook, noting that the punishing layout of the Barcelona circuit leaves "no place to hide" for an uncompetitive car package. The team is fully prepared to protect both Alonso and teammate Lance Stroll from the inevitable media backlash as they brace to fight among the backmarkers.

Jemimah Rodrigues relishes India-Pakistan WC hype

NEW DELHI

Indian batter Jemimah Rodrigues opened up about the unparalleled external pressure surrounding an India-Pakistan cricket match, revealing that the intense hype extends all the way down to her building's security staff. Speaking ahead of India's highly anticipated ICC Women's T20 World Cup opener against their arch-rivals in Birmingham, Rodrigues shared a humorous yet telling anecdote about public expectations. "Even my building watchman tells me, 'Lose to anyone, but not against Pakistan,'" Rodrigues remarked during an appearance in media platforms. "That is the kind of pressure we deal with because people just love cricket and they absolutely love this rivalry."

Rodrigues recalled her very first encounter against Pakistan, recollecting how team leader Harmanpreet Kaur addressed the dressing room to ground the players. Kaur had advised the team to acknowledge the outside noise and immense fan expectations rather than denying the pressure.

Despite the unique buzz surrounding the clash at Edgbaston, the 25-year-old emphasized that the Indian squad remains strictly focused on their ultimate target is lifting their maiden T20 World Cup trophy. Under the guidance of head coach Amol Muzumdar, the team has implemented a daily collective visualization routine to manifest their championship goals. The middle-order batter noted that India's preparation has involved intentionally stepping out of their comfort zones during training camps, practicing under highly restrictive match-play scenarios to build mental resilience.

Indian hockey set to face Netherlands in Rotterdam

India begin a pivotal Pro League phase in Rotterdam, seeking revival while Manpreet Singh nears a historic milestone

NEW DELHI

Struggling at the bottom of the standings, the Indian men's hockey team enters the crucial Netherlands leg of the FIH Pro League. Languishing at the penultimate spot with just four points from eight matches, the squad desperately needs victories to escape the relegation zone.

Led by captain Harmanpreet Singh, India will face the host nation on June 14 and June 21 in Rotterdam, with back-to-back clashes against Germany sandwiched in between. Beyond surviving the tournament, chief coach Craig Fulton emphasized that these high-intensity fixtures serve as vital preparation for the upcoming 2026 FIH World Cup, scheduled this August.

"Our focus is simple: press well, be dangerous on the counter, and be consistent," Fulton stated, eager to test team combinations against top-tier opponents. Following this leg, the team travels to London to conclude their campaign against England and archrivals Pakistan.

The opening match also marks a monumental historic milestone for Indian hockey. Veteran midfielder Manpreet Singh is set to earn his 412th international cap, equaling the all-time appearance record currently held by Hockey India President Dilip Tirkey.

Tirkey warmly congratulated the former Tokyo 2020 bronze-winning captain, calling his sustained elite performance a testament to his extraordinary character. Hockey India officials expressed immense confidence that Manpreet's landmark achievement will deeply inspire the squad as they battle to regain their form ahead of a heavily packed international calendar.

Bryce duo rescues Scotland's WC

MANCHESTER

Kathryn and Sarah Bryce starred with a century partnership as Scotland posted 161/5, setting Ireland a challenging World Cup target

Captain Kathryn Bryce and her sister Sarah put on a spectacular batting masterclass to power Scotland to a highly competitive 161/5 against Ireland in their ICC Women's T20 World Cup opening match at Emirates Old Trafford.

After Scotland's openers fell in quick succession, leaving the team at a shaky 37/2 in the sixth over, the Bryce sisters joined forces to steady the ship. The dynamic duo completely transformed the game through a brilliant, game-changing third-wicket partnership. They mixed clever innovation with raw power, rotating the strike seamlessly and punishing loose deliveries from the Irish bowlers.

Their incredible stand crossed the century mark in the 16th over, with Kathryn reaching a superb half-century off just 31 balls. Together, they added 106 runs to the scoreboard, shifting the momentum entirely in Scotland's favor. The partnership finally ended when Arlene Kelly dismissed Sarah for an aggressive 49, cruelly denying her a maiden World Cup fifty by just one run. Kathryn continued to lead from the front, top-scoring with a commanding 60 off 39 balls before being caught in the penultimate over.

Ireland fought back exceptionally well in the final death overs, spearheaded by Ava Canning, who finished with impressive figures of 3-27. The late bowling resurgence successfully restricted Scotland to just 19 runs from the final four overs. Despite the late slowdown, Scotland's formidable total leaves Ireland needing a demanding 162 runs to secure their first-ever victory in tournament history.

Mahak Narwase appointed India Under-19 Vice-Captain

RAJNANDGAON

Chhattisgarh is celebrating as local cricket talent Mahak Narwase has been named vice-captain of the Indian Women's Under-19 team for their upcoming tour of Sri Lanka. The young athlete expressed immense joy over her new leadership role, sharing how eager she is to embrace the challenge and connect with a fresh group of talented teammates.

Currently, Narwase is refining her skills at a national training camp in Bengaluru. The team is gearing up for an exciting T20 match scheduled in Chennai on June 22 before they head across the ocean.

Reflecting on her inspiring journey, Narwase revealed she has dedicated eight years to cricket. She credited much of her success to her childhood coach, Manoj Tiwari. In her early days, Narwase uniquely honed her skills by practicing and competing alongside boys, a tough environment that helped shape her into a resilient player. Remarkably, the rising star is balancing this intense athletic milestone with her regular education as a Class 12 student.

The proud town of Rajnandgaon is buzzing with excitement over her major achievement. Municipal Corporation Mayor Madhusudan Yadav extended his warmest congratulations to Narwase, her supportive family, and her dedicated coach. Yadav noted that she has brought immense pride to the entire state of Chhattisgarh. He wished her ultimate success on the international stage, hoping this vice-captaincy serves as a final stepping stone toward her ultimate dream of joining the senior national Indian team.

Will Young replaces retired legend Kane Williamson

LONDON

New Zealand has officially added top-order batter Will Young to their Test squad for the remaining two matches against England. The sudden call-up comes immediately after legendary former captain Kane Williamson announced his emotional retirement from international cricket.

The 32-year-old Young, who has played 23 Tests and scored 1,215 runs for his country, was last seen in action during an ODI tour against Bangladesh. He is scheduled to land in England this Sunday and will immediately join the national team's training sessions. New Zealand is gearing up for a crucial second Test match against England at The Oval, which is set to begin on June 17.

Young faces the massive challenge of stepping into the shoes of Williamson, who ended his glittering 16-year career at the age of 35. Widely celebrated as New Zealand's greatest batter, Williamson finishes as the nation's all-time leading run-scorer with a staggering 19,346 international runs, featuring 48 centuries and six double-centuries across 378 total appearances.

Beyond his incredible batting statistics, Williamson leaves behind an unmatched leadership legacy. He famously captained the Black Caps through a historic golden era from 2016 to 2024, guiding them to two ICC World Cup finals and winning the inaugural ICC World Test Championship in 2021. Cricket fans around the world have poured in tributes for the departing icon, while New Zealand looks toward a new generation to carry the torch forward.

ELIMINATOR VICTORY POWERS GWALIOR SHERNIS TO FINAL

INDORE

The Gwalior Shernis are riding a wave of immense confidence in the inaugural season of the women's Madhya Pradesh League (MPL) T20 Scindia Cup 2026. Following a spectacular six-wicket triumph over the Royal Nimar Eagles and a hard-fought victory against the Bundelkhand Bulls in the Eliminator, the team has successfully secured its spot in the grand finale.

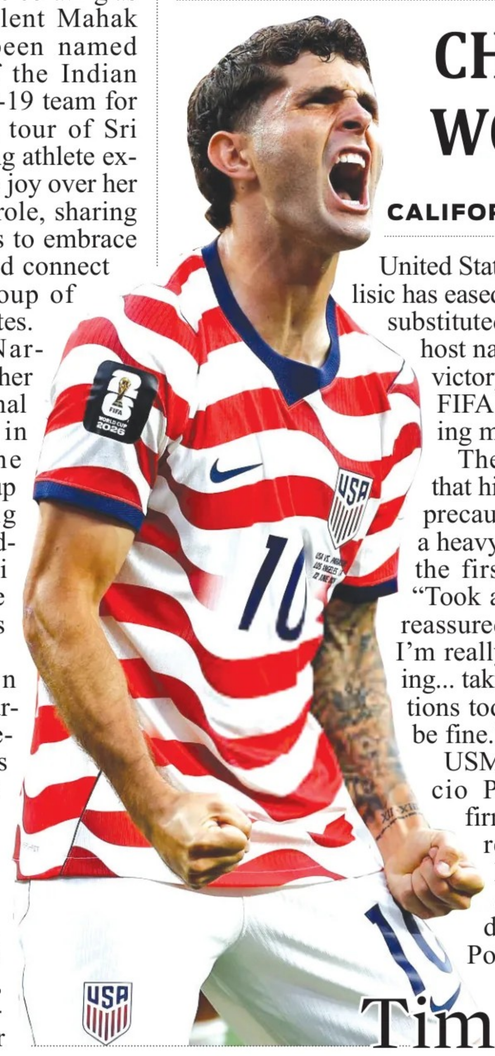
Expressing great pride in the squad's journey, team owner Kartikey Goyal noted that the team's morale is incredibly high. "The josh is high. We're hoping to carry this winning momentum all the way to the final," Goyal stated in an official release, emphasizing his desire to lift the coveted trophy.

A major driving force behind the team's dream run has been Captain Nuzhat Parween. The skipper has been in exceptional form, delivering highly consistent performances with the bat and showcasing sharp leadership on the field during high-pressure knockout matches.

Goyal highly praised Parween's impact, noting that because this is a debut MPL tournament for both the management and the players, making a lasting mark is incredibly special. Ahead of the ultimate showdown, Goyal's message to his squad remained clear and inspiring, they have fully earned their place at the top, and by believing in their collective game, it is now time to go out and conquer the tournament.

CHRISTIAN PULISIC EASES WORLD CUP INJURY FEARS

CALIFORNIA



United States captain Christian Pulisic has eased injury fears after being substituted at halftime during the host nation's commanding 4-1 victory over Paraguay in their FIFA World Cup 2026 opening match.

The star winger revealed that his early exit was entirely precautionary after absorbing a heavy blow to his calf during the first 45 minutes of play. "Took a bit of a kick," Pulisic reassured fans post-match. "So I'm really hoping that it's nothing... taking a little bit of precautions today, but I'm hoping I'll be fine."

USMNT head coach Mauricio Pochettino later confirmed that Pulisic was already carrying a minor knock sustained during a training session two days prior to the match. Pochettino explained that once the muscle began to cool down at halftime, the medical staff chose not to risk any further damage. However, the manager remained highly optimistic, stating he expects Pulisic to return for the USA's next Group stage clash against Australia. Despite losing their talisman at the break, the United States maintained complete dominance to record the highest number of World Cup goals in the country's history.

Pulisic was instrumental early on, orchestrating a 7th-minute forced own-goal by Damian Bobadilla before providing a brilliant, pinpoint cross to set up a Folarin Balogun strike in the 31st minute. Balogun later netted a sensational second goal deep in stoppage time, while substitute Gio Reyna capped off the historic evening with a stunning long-range strike into the top corner.

The historic triumph puts the USA firmly at the top of their group, while neighboring co-hosts Canada fought back to rescue a 1-1 draw against Bosnia and Herzegovina. The United States squad will now travel to Seattle for their next highly anticipated group match.

England WC preps hit by transit theft

KANSAS CITY

England's preparations for the 2026 FIFA World Cup have suffered a highly bizarre security setback after a team transport vehicle carrying their vital training equipment was broken into. Local law enforcement has officially confirmed a grand theft investigation is underway.

The incident took place while the logistical gear was being driven from the Three Lions' pre-tournament warm-up camp in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, to their official tournament training base at Swope Soccer Village in Kansas City, Missouri. When the vans arrived ahead of the squad's scheduled arrival, staff discovered that a significant portion of the cargo had vanished.

Reports indicate that the stolen items include custom-fitted match boots for several of England's marquee players, as well as official tournament footballs and tactical training equipment. Shockingly, some reports state the team was momentarily left with just a single football on site, creating an immediate logistics scramble for the Football Association (FA).

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department reacted swiftly, announcing that an investigation was aggressively launched immediately. "We are investigating a possible theft of equipment from a team vehicle that arrived in Kansas City with items missing this evening," the police statement read. Authorities quickly added that two subjects of interest have already been apprehended and taken into custody pending further interrogation.

Despite the security breach and missing gear, head coach Thomas Tuchel's 26-man squad is still scheduled to hold their debut training session at Swope Soccer Village. FA officials are working alongside local police to recover the goods as quickly as possible to ensure minimal disruption to the players' schedules.

Tim Ream's booking overturned in historic VAR incident

LOS ANGELES

United States veteran defender Tim Ream found himself at the center of a historic refereeing milestone during the USMNT's commanding 4-1 victory over Paraguay in their FIFA World Cup Group D opener at SoFi Stadium. In a completely unprecedented turn of events, a yellow card originally shown to the 38-year-old center-back was overturned by Dutch referee Danny Makkelie following an intensive Video Assistant Referee (VAR) review. The bizarre sequence began in the second half when Makkelie booked Ream, believing he had illegally brought down Paraguay captain Miguel Almirón.

Confusion gripped the stadium as VAR intervened after the ensuing free kick had already been taken. Following a lengthy on-field monitor review, Makkelie realized he had penalised the wrong man, rescinded Ream's booking, and instead yellow-carded Almirón for simulation.

The incident marks the first time in FIFA World Cup history that VAR has successfully corrected a mistaken identity booking. The correction was made possible by newly implemented tournament regulations championed by FIFA Referee Committee Chairman Pierluigi Collina. Under the updated 2026 guidelines, VAR review protocols have expanded to catch wrongful discipline resulting from mistaken identity or critical second-yellow offenses. "The decision reflects the exact evolution of technology we wanted to see," refereeing officials noted post-match. "Ensuring the correct player is penalized is vital for the integrity of the game."

The technical delay did little to ruin the party for Mauricio Pochettino's squad. The co-hosts absolutely dominated the encounter, taking an early lead via an own goal from Paraguay's Damián Bobadilla off a Weston McKennie cross.

American star Chris Richards makes WC history

CALIFORNIA

The United States kicked off their World Cup journey with a spectacular 4-1 victory over Paraguay, but it was defender Chris Richards who stole the headlines by breaking a sixty-year-old passing record.

Playing at SoFi Stadium, Richards completed all 83 of his passes with perfect accuracy. According to statistics, this is the highest number of passes ever completed without a single error in a World Cup match since 1966. The center-back was absolutely flawless, helping his team control the game from start to finish. The American squad dominated early. Just seven minutes in, Christian Pulisic forced an own goal from Paraguay. Star forward Folarin Balogun then doubled the lead in the 31st minute after converting a beautiful cross from Pulisic.

However, the victory brought some minor worry. Head coach Mauricio Pochettino substituted Pulisic at halftime after the 27-year-old took a hard kick to his calf. Pochettino later reassured fans, stating the substitution was just a safety measure to avoid any serious injuries.

Without Pulisic, the US team kept pushing. Although Paraguay scored in the 73rd minute, Gio Reyna sealed the win with a brilliant long-range goal into the top corner. Balogun then added a final goal deep in stoppage time.

The Americans will travel to Seattle for their next group match full of confidence.

ALLU ARJUN'S 'Happy' Re-Release Storms Kerala Theaters

Allu Arjun's cult hit Happy returned in 4K, drawing massive crowds and sparking euphoric celebrations across theaters.

Icon star Allu Arjun has proven his massive popularity once again as the re-release of his twenty-year-old movie, Happy, sparked absolute chaos and celebration across Kerala theaters.

Originally directed by A. Karunakaran and released back in 2006, the film was a massive hit that ran for over 150 days in the state. Now, two decades later, the romantic action-comedy has returned to the big screen using crisp 4K technology.

The response from local Malayali audiences has been nothing short of spectacular, proving that the actor's special bond with the state remains unbreakable.

Theaters quickly transformed into festival grounds from the very first day of the re-release. Whenever Allu Arjun's famous dance moves and evergreen songs played on screen, overjoyed fans rushed to the front to dance and cheer.

Many moviegoers even recreated iconic scenes inside the cinema halls, with videos of the wild celebrations instantly going viral across various platforms.

Local experts note that the immense crowd response easily rivals the recent re-releases of legendary Malayalam superstars like Mohanlal. Audiences were even heard chanting praises for the actor as the credits rolled.

Brought back to theaters by Radhak Arts, this successful re-release highlights why local fans affectionately call him 'Mallu Arjun.

' Currently, the beloved superstar is busy working on highly anticipated, massive global movie projects with acclaimed directors Atlee and Lokesh Kanagaraj, promising even bigger treats for his fans in the near future.

Official announcement of 'OG 2' sparks excitement

Pawan Kalyan's OG 2 announcement has thrilled fans, with director Sujeeth returning and production expected to begin this Nov.

The official announcement of OG 2 has sparked massive excitement among Pawan Kalyan fans worldwide. The sequel to the highly anticipated action-drama will once again be directed by Sujeeth, who is returning to helm this massive franchise.

According to latest industry buzz, the film is expected to officially go on floors this November. By that time, director Sujeeth is likely to wrap up his current shooting schedule for his upcoming project starring Nani. This will allow the filmmaker to shift his complete focus and creative energy toward directing the eagerly awaited high-octane sequel.

The exciting news has already triggered a massive wave of enthusiasm across various platforms. Fans are expressing immense eagerness to see their favorite star, Pawan Kalyan, return to the sleek, stylish, and action-packed world of OG. Social media timelines are flooded with celebratory posts and fan-made posters, proving that the anticipation for this project is already sky-high.

If everything progresses according to the makers' current schedule, OG 2 is on track to become one of the biggest Telugu film projects to launch production later this year. The combination of Pawan Kalyan's star power and Sujeeth's stylish filmmaking promises a cinematic spectacle.

Movie lovers and industry insiders are keeping a close watch on this development.

'Sing Geetham' aims to dominate theaters

Legendary filmmaker Singeetam Srinivasa Rao's latest cinematic creation, Sing Geetham, has struck a chord with critics and early viewers. The movie is receiving glowing reviews and strong word-of-mouth praise for its deeply emotional story, unique concept, and music-driven narrative.

However, despite the warm reception, the real test for the film starts now at the box office. While the initial feedback is highly encouraging, the movie needs a massive boost in theater attendance over the weekend to guarantee a successful long-term run. Industry experts emphasize that the next forty-eight hours will be absolutely critical in deciding the film's ultimate commercial fate.

Fortunately, the road ahead looks promising. With its main competitor, Peddi, no longer posing a major threat in theaters, Sing Geetham has a golden opportunity to dominate the box office. The film is perfectly positioned to attract families looking for a wholesome, high-quality cinematic experience.

To turn this positive critical buzz into ticket sales, entertainment analysts suggest that the filmmakers need to act quickly. Boosting promotional campaigns and keeping the movie trending in the news will be essential to draw larger crowds into theaters.

Ultimately, Sing Geetham has won the hearts of the critics, but its financial survival now rests entirely in the hands of the general public. Whether this artistic triumph transforms into a true commercial blockbuster depends on how many families choose to buy a ticket and experience the musical magic this weekend.

'29 The Film' achieves massive digital success

Filmmaker Rathna Kumar is celebrating the massive digital success of his latest project, 29 The Film. Following a victorious run in cinema halls, the movie is now witnessing a phenomenal response on its streaming platform, leaving the director deeply moved by the global appreciation.

Sharing his immense gratitude, Kumar revealed that the past few days have been incredibly emotional. He has been flooded with countless messages from viewers worldwide thanking him for the film's powerful narrative. Interestingly, many fans even apologized for missing the movie during its initial theatrical run. The director noted that his heart was screaming with joy, as the overwhelming digital love exceeded all his expectations.

The filmmaker has received feedback spanning multiple countries and languages. In addition to rave reviews, his social media timelines are packed with creative tributes, including fan art, video edits, and memes. Kumar confessed that reading these heartfelt reactions moved him to tears, reminding him of how deeply cinema can connect people across geographical boundaries.

Many streaming viewers shared that the movie offered them emotional healing during tough times, a sentiment that Kumar says has healed him as a creator. While welcoming the praise, he also acknowledged constructive criticism, promising to implement those lessons into his future cinematic projects.

Ben Schwartz joins Sam Mendes' Beatles project

Actor Ben Schwartz, famously known for voicing Sonic the Hedgehog, has officially joined the massive cast of The Beatles - A Four-Film Cinematic Event. Directed by Oscar-winner Sam Mendes, this highly ambitious project will feature Schwartz in the role of legendary New York disc jockey Murray the K. The star-studded ensemble already includes Paul Mescal as Paul McCartney, Harris Dickinson as John Lennon, Barry Keoghan as Ringo Starr, and Joseph Quinn as George Harrison. Other major attachments include Saoirse Ronan as Linda McCartney, Anna Sawai as Yoko Ono, and James Norton as iconic band manager Brian Epstein.

This groundbreaking series marks the first time Apple Corps Ltd. and The Beatles have granted full life-story and music rights for a scripted film project. Each of the four movies will focus on a different band member's journey.

Star STR parts ways with AR Murugadoss

Popular Tamil actor Silambarasan TR has reportedly backed out of his highly anticipated upcoming collaboration with hit director AR Murugadoss. The massive project, which had generated intense excitement among Kollywood fans, would have paired one of the industry's most prominent stars with a filmmaker famous for delivering box office blockbusters.

According to media reports from Nakkheeran, the actor's incredibly packed shooting schedule is the main reason behind this unexpected decision. Silambarasan currently has multiple major cinematic commitments lined up, making it extremely difficult to allot the required filming dates for Murugadoss' movie. Consequently, the star chose to gracefully part ways with the project due to these inescapable scheduling conflicts.

This development has surprised many in the industry, especially since the script was reportedly written and tailored specifically to suit Silambarasan's unique on-screen strengths. Following the star's sudden departure, rumors are circulating that the filmmakers have quickly launched a search for new talent. Industry insiders suggest that a rising young actor might now be selected to take over the leading role, though no official announcement has been made.

Meanwhile, Silambarasan is shifting his complete focus toward a massive, large-scale project that demands intense preparation and extensive pre-production work. While certain government approvals for this unnamed venture are taking longer than expected, the actor is keeping his schedule completely clear to give it his full attention. Though some fans may feel disappointed by this exit, analysts believe it allows the star to focus entirely on his future big-budget blockbusters.

Joemon Jyothir, Alan Bin lead 'Poocha Sir'

Acclaimed filmmaker Vipin Das has officially announced a new Malayalam movie titled Poocha Sir. The production team unveiled the project with an eye-catching title poster featuring a cat. The film will see rising stars Joemon Jyothir and Alan Bin Siraj playing the lead roles.

The project marks the directorial debut of Rejivan Abdul Basheer, who previously gained experience working as the chief associate director on Vaazha 2. Sharing the creative poster online, Vipin Das teased audiences with the intriguing tagline, "Not just a cat... a legend in disguise." This marks the second production venture for the banner following their successful film Eko. The script and screenplay have been penned by Arun D. Jose, popularly known as ADJ. He is well-regarded in the industry for directing and writing hit youth-centric comedies such as Jo & Jo, 18+ Journey of Love, and Bromance.

Official teaser for 'Oh..! Sukumari' officially released

The official teaser for the upcoming film Oh..! Sukumari has been released, promising audiences a fun-filled rural romantic comedy with an unusual twist. Starring Thiru Veer and Aishwarya Rajesh in the lead roles, the movie offers a refreshing take on traditional village love stories.

The plot revolves around a carefree village youngster who dreams of marrying a kind-hearted, sensible girl. His life takes a dramatic turn when he meets Damini and instantly believes she is his perfect match.

Determined to win her heart, he quickly sets their wedding plans in motion. However, his life turns upside down when he accidentally discovers a bizarre secret hidden by her eccentric family.

Making his directorial debut, Bharat Dharshan skillfully blends rustic village charm, local political dynamics, lighthearted romance, and unexpected fantasy elements into an entertaining narrative. The teaser indicates that the movie will be packed with humor and engaging situational comedy. Produced by Maheswara Reddy Mooli under the Gangaa Entertainments banner, the film features high production values. To cater to a wider audience across South India, the makers have planned a grand multilingual release. Oh..! Sukumari will hit the big screens in Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada.

Adivi Sesh praises 'Mai Vaapas Aaunga'

Tollywood actor Adivi Sesh has showered high praise on the new movie Mai Vaapas Aaunga. The talented star officially declared the film a modern-day classic, calling it one of director Imtiaz Ali's absolute finest works to date.

Sesh described the movie as a beautiful and heartfelt exploration of love, relationships, and human emotions. He noted that the story is so powerful that it easily transcends different generations of viewers. In his online review, Sesh particularly lauded the exceptional performances of the main cast, including Diljit Dosanjh, Vedang Raina, Sharvari, and Rajat Kapoor. He stated that each of these actors brought incredible depth and genuine authenticity to the narrative, making the characters feel entirely real.

However, Sesh reserved his most special praise for veteran Bollywood actor Naseeruddin Shah, calling his performance in the film a true masterclass in acting. According to Sesh, Shah's subtle facial expressions, deliberate pauses, and brilliant command over his craft effortlessly elevate the entire movie to a whole new level. The glowing review from a respected filmmaker and actor like Sesh has created a massive buzz online. Film lovers are now incredibly eager to experience this emotional masterpiece in theaters themselves. With Imtiaz Ali's signature storytelling and a stellar cast delivering top-tier performances, Mai Vaapas Aaunga seems completely destined to leave a lasting mark on Indian cinema.

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